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THE RANDLORDS AND FIGURATIONS: AN ELIASIAN STUDY OF SOCIAL CHANGE AND SOUTH AFRICA

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

PhD (Sociology)

By

Jacques Human

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LAY SUMMARY

This study investigates the role that the Randlords, a group of mining magnates with wide-ranging concerns operating in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, played in social change in South Africa. The way of thinking about this is in terms of figurations, or groups of people who have a shared purpose and tend to stick together. It also develops a way of understanding and drawing conclusions from letters and old documents. The first Randlord investigated was George Farrar, and it was found that many Randlords had different goals and views, but many did share the views of goals of a colonial administrator called Alfred Milner. The thesis then looked at the documents of one of the most important mining companies at the time and found that many of the Randlords who worked for this company did not work towards similar goals outside of the company. The thesis then went back to look at the papers of Alfred Milner and his communications with Randlords. It found that there were a number of small groups of people who worked together towards goals outside of their employment, and these always had to do with the goals of Milner.

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the role that the Randlords, a group of mining magnates with wide-ranging concerns operating in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, played in social change in South Africa. The approach taken is that of Norbert Elias's process sociology, explored in Chapter 1. This places a particular emphasis on figurations, evolving groups of interdependent people linked by some shared purpose with memberships that change over time, as well as on sociogenesis, his term for the processual and longitudinal aspects of social change. There is no sufficient account of an Eliasian research methodology, and Chapter 2 develops an approach which puts his methodological thinking to work in my research practice. Built into this are ideas about 'documents of life' and in particular letters and how to hone in on the figurational aspects of letter-writing and exchanges as a key means of opening up the detailed processes at work. Chapter 3 puts these ideas into practice regarding the letters of one of the Randlords, George Farrar, and spells out the detailed elements of my methodology in doing so. This analysis indicates that there were overlapping associations and figurations of people, and individuals could be part of a number of figurations with varying degrees of commitment and centrality. In addition, there were significant differences between Randlords regarding where their larger goals and aspirations lay, such that they were not a homogenous group. It also shows there was a strong figurational effect around Alfred Milner, in which Farrar played a part.

Chapter 4 explores letters and related documents in the Papers of the Central Mining and Investment Corporation (CMIC), with a specific focus on events both large and small, as events have been seen as a motor-force of change in some discussions. My investigation shows that there was a 'quasi-figuration' aspect to the CMIC, in taking on a figurational character in particular circumstances, and with a close association between the men involved around finance and business but not regarding matters of affect and political purpose. The activities and interactions of Randlords explored here include Julius Wernher, Alfred Beit, George Albu, Abe Bailey, Lionel Phillips and Jules Porgés. The men most closely associated with the CMIC can best be described as at basis an association with shared interests, although taking on figurational aspects in particular circumstances. More generally, my work on the CMIC papers shows there was a close association around finance and business but not regarding matters of affect and political purpose, suggesting that some associations do not quite become figurational apart from in specific circumstances and that the role of affect in changing the character of an association is an important although not the only factor in this.

Chapter 5 focuses on the letters and related papers of Randlords present in the Milner Collection, and is particularly concerned with investigating communications between Milner and Cecil Rhodes, Julius Wernher, Percy Fitzpatrick, George Farrar, Alfred Beit and Nathaniel Rothschild. It shows that a number of figurations and quasi-figurations existed; and while at points these overlapped, they were still distinguishable, including a distinct Randlord figuration. Milner became an important figure within a number of them, and as a result often acted as bridge between finance interests and a particular brand of Imperial politics, as a symbolic figurehead for a local imperial project closely associated with him and his policies.

While the figurations analysed are difficult to pin down, as there are often overlaps and intersections between them, my analysis has put considerable sociogenetic depth to figuration because, as Elias recommends, it has produced reality-congruent 'real types'. Doing so has shown that what binds figurations together differs from case to case, they change over time as people join or leave the associational links, and that the shape of figurations also changes because having variable and sometimes conflicting cores and peripheries. The thesis concludes that the Randlords did influence social change in South Africa in the specific sense that for a period of time they dominated the diamond and then the gold industries. However, looking in detail at small events as well as large ones in many letter exchanges indicates that it is the long *durée* of change set in motion by diamonds and gold that had and continues to have the greater impact, rather than deliberate attempts to produce or control change.

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, confirm that the following thesis is my own work and of my own composition and that this work has not been submitted for any other degree or qualification.

Signed:

Dated:

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Although it is often said that doctoral research is a lonely process, I could not possibly have finished my thesis without the help of my supervisors.

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CHAPTER 1: RESEARCHING THE RANDLORDS IN AN ELIASIAN THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

INTRODUCTION

This thesis focuses on the role that the Randlords, a group of mining magnates with wide-ranging concerns operating in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, played in bringing about social change in South Africa (Wheatcroft, 1985). These individuals, all men, are of particular interest because they controlled the diamonds and gold industries and companies that instigated and fuelled rapid social change(s) in South Africa and the effects of which continues to play out even now (Alexander et al., 2013). At the pinnacle of major inter/national financial and political institutions, these men contributed to many social and economic processes, from the relationship between Boer and British, black and white, finance and state institutions, to the formation of local states, as well as the activities of international companies that wielded the power to promote war and legitimate violence, as the means of extending their interests. To speak of the major social changes occurring in South Africa over this time period (Lester, Nel and Binns, 2000; Feinstein, 2005) is to speak of these companies, these men, and the diamonds and gold industries which they dominated. They were active in organisations and places that turned out to be, or were made to be, strategic. Their influence was partly a matter of planned activity and partly that they were agents within larger structural processes that were occurring.

Sociology was created to explain social change. Many of its founders were living in a time of unprecedented social transformation and a new discipline was needed to describe and explain such changes (Lachmann, 2013: 1; Abrams, 1982; Barkey, 2009). The focus for them was largely on social change in Europe, while South African society and the changes it has gone through is a crucible for contemporary sociologists interested in social change because its experience has been of similarly profound social, economic and political changes – but occurring in a far more condensed time period. More specifically, since the later nineteenth century South African society has experienced an industrial revolution that started centuries earlier in Europe and which has profoundly transformed the lives of its inhabitants, both black and white (Marks and Rathbone, 1982), regardless of whether directly involved in the key industrial sectors or not. As an example, in the just thirty-year period separating the discovery of gold and the outbreak of the First World War in 1914:

A republic founded on a modest agricultural economy was transformed into a colony boasting the world's largest and most technologically sophisticated gold mining industry – a traumatic transition which was overseen by four different governments, punctuated by an attempted coup [the Jameson Raid], and at one stage completely halted by a bloody

conflict lasting two and a half years [the South African War 1899-1902] (Van Onselen, 1982: 1).

In some ways industrialisation in South Africa was similar to the British and American experience, as defined by the introduction and development of technology that transformed the nature of production and mineral extraction. What differed were the stimulants of industrialisation, the timing of events, and the enclave character of its organisation and effects. In Britain, the availability of coal, water and iron were among the major drivers of manufacturing industries, and the growth of capital and industry were interrelated (Trapido, 1971). In South Africa, social change was driven by a 'minerals revolution' owing to the discovery, first of diamonds in the 1860s and 70s in New Rush (later Kimberley), followed by gold on the Witwatersrand in the 1880s. These discoveries occurred considerably after the industrial revolutions in Europe and the U.S., and during a time of international investment booms in gold, silver, diamonds and copper. The surge in demand for these minerals was part of a new quest for resources to supply industrial growth in Europe, as well as the growing consumer demands of the new rich in a time of considerable materialism (Dummett, 2009: 9-10). Gold was of particular financial interest as, by the end of the nineteenth century most Western European countries had adopted the gold standard. Adding to this, upward spiralling stock market speculation drove the surge in the issue and purchase of shares in foreign mining companies on the London and New York stock exchanges (Dummett, 2009: 10).

Thus the South African experience of industrialisation has some similarities, but overall differed from the European and American experience. It did not follow a gradual industrial expansion as in Europe and America, where growth was dependent on the expansion of internal markets. It did not experience the first century of industrialisation when Europe and then America did, as there was no financial basis or known resources at that time to form the backbone of such an industrial revolution. The discoveries of diamonds and gold provided this incentive and brought with them the requirements for such a revolution 'ready-made'; this included finance capital, mining technology, electrification, steam engines and the skills required; and the South African economy developed in an enclave form, with industrial enclaves at a few focused points within an agricultural and pastoral base.

This was the Victorian period (1837-1901) in Britain, marked by large-scale rapid urban growth and increases in overall population, and has also been dubbed Britain's 'Imperial century', whereby it added around 10 million square miles of territory and roughly 400 million people to the British Empire. British society was changing rapidly, with technological advancements in railways and steam power revolutionizing factory production and transport, with widespread social changes as well. The pressures created by this growth, as well as a sense of imperial

mission, belief in separate human races, and the superiority of whites, in part led Britain to look abroad for new markets, new resources, and new populations to govern.

Between the Industrial Revolution and the outbreak of the First World War, there were five Western countries at the leading edge of power: France, Great Britain, Habsburg Austria, Prussia-Germany, and the United States. Britain was the clear nineteenth century economic leader, dominating specific economic specialities, including manufacturing, shipping and distribution, financial instruments, and sterling as a reserve currency (Mann, 1993: 266). This economic superiority was however being eroded by competition most notably from the United States and Germany, and Great Britain's Naval strength was increasingly stretched by its global concern, and challenged by a growing German fleet (Kennedy, 2013: 36). Growing awareness of Great Britain's relative decline amongst its elites, and fear that her rivals would exclude British trade, pushed Great Britain to formally begin incorporating her territories. South Africa and its interior was one such arena of tension and competition.

Tensions between British authority and Dutch settlers had existed since Great Britain occupied the Cape peninsular in the late 18th and early 19th century, in a move to deny the port to the French during her war with France. Dutch settlers had lived with minimal interference prior to British occupation, and determined to cast off British authority, Dutch leaders organised the exodus of Dutch speaking colonists into the South African interior in order to establish their own autonomous states. The British government had until this point no real interest in formal colonization of these areas. However, increasing tension and competition in the interior began shifting British thinking. Germany had annexed South West Africa (Namibia) in 1884, and the Transvaal was claiming territory to its West. The Transvaal also sought a railway link to the sea, one which German financiers were all too ready to finance, and which would have reduced British control over the region. These tensions were further exaggerated by the discovery first of diamonds and then gold, which shifted the primary source of prosperity in Southern Africa from agriculture to minerals and made the Transvaal the economic motor of Southern Africa. The wealth potential from minerals, as well as the increasing pressure presented by Germany, pressured Great Britain into increasingly more desperate attempts to exert control (Kennedy, 2013: 83).

These discoveries also led to the influx of thousands of British speculators, who would in time come to dominate the mines and form a new pro-British business class. Tensions between this business class, at the head of which sat Rhodes in Cape Town, and the rule of the Boer government, led the British settlers, in collusion with the British Government, to manufacture a series of political crises, culminating in the Second Boer War in 1899.

The influx of materials, goods and people drove the unprecedented expansion of what became the cities of Kimberley and Johannesburg, which outstripped European cities in their ‘modernness’ and acted as city-based industrial enclaves in what was (and to a considerable extent remains) a significantly pastoral and agrarian society. Prior to the minerals discoveries, South Africa was a strategic location, behind its major ports featuring a colonial hinterland composed of a medley of agrarian political units: the two British colonies of the Cape and Natal, the two landlocked Boer republics of the Orange Free State and the South African Republic/Transvaal, and a number of African kingdoms (Etherington, 2001; Wheatcroft, 1985; Feinstein, 2005). The sudden development of advanced urban markets, which then in turn impacted on the agrarian interior, acted as a massive economic multiplier, jump-starting other trades from transport to agriculture, coal, dynamite and electrification (Lester, Nel and Binns, 2000). In addition, an expanding network of trade, communication and transport quickly tilted South Africa’s economic core away from the coastal areas of the Cape and Natal into the interior, where the two mining regions and their respective cities lay.

While diamond mining was initially characterised by a fairly egalitarian system of smallholders, including black South Africans, over time cycles of boom and bust in the diamond market and increasing mining costs meant that the mines came to be monopolized through a series of mergers and acquisitions by joint stock companies with finance raised largely in Britain and Europe. By 1888, for example, diamond production at Kimberley was effectively controlled by De Beers Consolidated, which by 1900 was producing 50% of the Cape Colony’s exports (Lester, Nel and Binns, 2000; Kubicek, 1991). With existing links with major international financiers and money made on the diamond mines, a number of key owners of Kimberley mines, including Cecil Rhodes, Barney Barnato, Charles Rudd, Alfred Beit and JB Robinson, were then able to gain control of and monopolise the gold mines (Roberts, 1976).

By the turn of the century, a small group of interlocking mining houses also controlled gold production, producing over a quarter of the world’s supply (Lester, Nel and Binns, 2000: 98). The men who controlled these mines and were successful at tapping European financial markets came to be known as the ‘Randlords’. The Randlords were distinguished by controlling, often from a base in diamond mining, the gold mines on the Witwatersrand, and they were among the wealthiest men of the late Victorian and Edwardian age (Fraser, 2014). The most powerful and wealthy included Lionel Philips and Barnett Isaac Barnato, who were British; Cecil Rhodes and Charles Rudd, also British; Alfred Beit, Hermann Eckstein and Julius Wernher, who were German; Jules Porgés, an Austrian, and two further Germans, Sigismund Neumann and Maximilian Michaelis (Fraser, 2014). In other words, the Randlords largely came from Great Britain, Germany and Austria, the three leading countries vying for power in a time where romantic nationalism had swept through Europe. However, these differences in national

backgrounds, regardless of larger political conflicts, do not appear to have significantly influenced who Randlords chose to do business with. While a British figuration did form in South Africa, these did not seem to affect their willingness to work with German, French or Austrian Randlords or financiers, nor did the national identities of mainland European Randlords seem to have played any defining role in their decision making. Indeed, German Randlords such as Julius Wernher, George Albu and Alfred Beit naturalised as British citizens and moved permanently to London early in their careers.

The finance house of Rothschild – already with an eye on gold mining – also played a key role, launching (through a family-owned Exploration Company) Consolidated Deep Level Co., the Geldenhuis Deep, followed by the flotation of Rand Mines and Goldfields (Ferguson, 1998: 350-352). In addition, the Rothschilds, through Nathan Rothschild, had a direct relationship with Rhodes, and in essence they part-funded and steered De Beers' monopolization of the diamond industry through a series of mergers and acquisitions which could not have been achieved without the backing of a major City finance house (Ferguson, 1998: 350-352).

The archetypical and by far the best known Randlord was Cecil John Rhodes (1853-1902), with his influence on South Africa being unquestionable (Thomas, 1996; Wheatcroft, 1985; Galbraith, 1974; Maylam, 2005; Rotberg, 1988). In his short life, he added over one million square kilometres to the British Empire via his Chartered Company and named this land-area after himself – Rhodesia (Thomas, 1996). He created another company – De Beers – which gained a near monopoly of the world's diamond production. He became Prime Minister of the Cape in 1890, implementing laws that benefited the mining industry, and came to play a leading role in the gold mining industry through his company, Consolidated Goldfields of South Africa (Wheatcroft, 1985: 146). Overall, his activities impacted on nearly all economic spheres, from fruit-growing and wine production, the control of sheep diseases and the export of refrigerated farm produce, and the manufacture of dynamite, to the dynamics of the labour market and unfolding race matters (Thomas, 1996; Rotberg, 1988; Wheatcroft, 1987; Galbraith, 1974; Maylam, 2005).

Various of these men formed mining finance houses (H. Eckstein, Rhodes and Rudd's Consolidated Gold Fields, Barnato's Consolidated Investment Company, and Robinson's Randfontein Estates Gold Mining Company, the Anglo-French Exploration Company chaired by George Farrar and so on) which competed with one another for control over the gold mining industry, for labour and regarding other common interests. In addition, the power of these men stretched beyond mere finance. Some Randlords, especially Rhodes, involved themselves in politics, shaping many crucial political processes and decisions in line with the demands of the mining industry, as well as through this helping shape the distribution of power and resources between different ethnic and racial groups. In some respects they formed something resembling

a 'power elite'. In line with C.W. Mills's (1956) observations of this, over time a number of companies, financial institutions and networks of people at the top of the major institutions and organizations within South African (and to some extent British) society became interwoven and seemed to exert influence on nearly every facet of society. While the Randlords and the organizations which formed the basis of their power did not 'control' the direction of change in South Africa in any direct or simple sense, they were individuals and conglomerates of interests that sat at the pinnacle of the major political and economic organizations and institutions that provided the concentration of legitimate power within it, and I shall be discussing the ways in which they are best seen in terms of Norbert Elias's idea of a figuration. They were individuals who made many of the key decisions of the day and are likely to have had some influence on 'how things turned out', that is, the processes of change.

This thesis focuses on the period roughly from the discovery of diamonds in 1867 to the early 1920's when the last of the Randlord's died. This is for three reasons. First, this thesis is specifically concerned with the Randlords, and this time period covers the period from the discovery of diamonds to the death of the last of the Randlords. Second, and as will be discussed in Chapter 5, the mining industry transformed in the 1920's into a more corporate and administrative industry, removing the type of positions that the Randlords had held prior to this date. Finally, there was a notable lack of male heirs amongst the Randlords. Almost none of the social positions and social advantage held by the Randlords were passed on to a new generation.

My research contributes to debates concerning how and why societies change, and it does so by moving away from the broad sweeps of historical generalisations embedded in such terms as industrialisation, urbanisation and so on, which tend to lose sight of social actors and the unevenness of change within societies. It also moves away from approaches which focus on key individuals and so over-emphasise agency and lose sight of structure. My framework is one which views societies as composed of interconnected groupings of people who play a role in shaping the way things 'turn out', and who live within relational as well as processual worlds which define them and which, to varying degrees, and depending on factors which my research aims to come to grips with, they also help define. Because power is asymmetrically distributed through major institutions and organizations, some people are more able to influence social continuity and change than others. The Randlords controlled one of the most important sectors in South Africa's economy for a lengthy time, influenced numerous other sectors of its economy, and some of them were also very involved in its political life. As a result, this group of men had a greater capacity to affect its political and economic life than any other group within South African society over a lengthy period. This is not to imply that members of this grouping were able to somehow control the flow of history, but it is to point out that they are individuals and groupings within South African society who made decisions of national consequence, which impacted on the structural

conditions which influenced the lives of millions of South Africans, and which continue to shape the lives of South Africans today.

The changes that occurred in South Africa, as well as the individual legacies of the Randlords and their activities, are tracked in a wealth of detailed ‘documents of life’ (Plummer, 2001; Stanley, 2013a). As a consequence, it is possible, to varying degrees, to use these sources to investigate their activities in considerable detail, from their acquaintances and the people they associated with, to their more intimate family life, to their business and political careers. My research aims to do this with the conceptual assistance in particular of Norbert Elias’s process sociology (Elias, 1939/2012; 1965/2008; 1978/2012; 1983/2005; 1987/2010; 1989/2013), also drawing where appropriate on other approaches to social change.

The so-called founding fathers of sociology – Marx, Weber, and Durkheim – viewed sociology as *a priori* historical in character, as sociology is fundamentally concerned with explaining epochal social transformations (Lachmann, 2013). They constructed their analyses at the intersections of three dimensions of the social world, identified by Mills as structure, history and biography (Mills, 1959; Brewer, 2004: 320). This is also the cornerstone of Mills’s concept of the sociological imagination, for at its core “no social study that does not come back to the problems of biography, of history and of their intersections within a society has completed its intellectual journey” (Mills, 1959: 4; see Brewer, 2003). This is important when considering social change and the mechanisms by which it comes about. These mechanisms are not timeless and invariant, but themselves creations of historically-specific eras (Kumar, 2014: 9). Awareness of the centrality and intersections of history, biography and social structure to sociology should therefore play a large role in shaping the selection of analytical tools as well as general understandings of the object of study.

The social theorist whose work for me is best able to take this awareness into account is Norbert Elias and his process or figural sociology (Elias, 1978/2012; Dunning and Hughes, 2013). Firstly, process sociology circumvents the agency-structure dilemma by viewing society as a structured set of individuals who form dynamic figurations with one another, and so are bound or held together by fluid ties of interdependence (Elias, 1939/2012; 1965/2008; 1978/2012; 1983/2005; 1987/2010; 1989/2013). As my research is interested in the links between the individual (micro) level and the societal (macro) level and how these relate over time, his emphasis on figuration is particularly useful because it draws attention to and helps conceptualise the ways in which individuals relate to structures (or figurations) on numerous levels. Secondly, Elias’s theory of figurations and sociogenesis (or social process and ‘becoming’) emphasises the inadequacy of separating social life into discrete fields of research (sociology, psychology, politics and economics) and points out that these are aspects of the same social world and interwoven processes and cannot sensibly be separated (Elias, 1939/2012).

Thirdly, process sociology is by definition concerned with process; individuals, groups of individuals and social life and the structures which bind them together are all processual and should be understood as such (Elias, 1939/2012; 1978/2012). In this conception, social processes – sociogenesis or societal becoming – occur as a result of the actions of individuals and groups of individuals in figurations interweaving with one another over time, with the order in which this occurs being important to how things turn out. And fourthly, how things turn out is a result of the power ratios existing between the respective parties (or figurations), and the more equal the power ratio is, the more likely the outcome will be something which neither party planned (Elias, 1939/2012; 1978/2012). That is, Elias's emphasis helps to see that social change is often not planned, nor directed, nor does it follow an evolutionary track, but rather is the outcome of the interactions, whether hostile or friendly, of individuals and groups of individuals with some shared purpose.

I now turn to discussing in more detail the key elements of the conceptual apparatus developed by Elias. This is then later followed by considering key arguments in the theoretical exegesis surrounding Elias's work, and what aspects can be usefully integrated in my own approach.

NORBERT ELIAS AND PROCESS SOCIOLOGY: CORE CONCEPTS

One of the few universal features of human social life is that people are dependent on one another from the start to the end of their lives (Elias, 1978/2012). Throughout our lives, we are dependent on others for a variety of different needs, from the biological need for food and protection, to the social needs of companionship and being valued by others. People are social beings and orientate themselves towards each other. Human beings have a great capacity to learn; and if their environments are composed of other people, they will learn from them and their ideas and reference points will gradually become correlated with those of others. Individuals can of course act 'out of sync', and this can be an important feature of why groups of people do change over time. But in general, it is often against the interests of the individual to do so. Human beings, though to some degree genetically shaped, are also 'open' to their environments and learn from experience. In Elias's words, in the "peculiarity of the human psyche, its special malleability, its natural dependence on social moulding, lies the reason why one cannot take single individuals as one's starting point in order to understand the structure of their relationships to each other ... on the contrary one must start from the structure of the relations between individuals in order to understand the 'psyche' of the individual person" (Elias, 1978/2012: 37).

Elias recognised that humanity evolved these characteristics, but thought that extending the idea of evolution to social change is fundamentally incorrect as society does not act as an organic whole, although neither is it completely random. Social change for Elias is usually defined by

either ‘progress’ or ‘regression’ or a combination of the two (Elias 1987/2010: 157-158; Elias, 1978/2007: 158-74). The key to explaining social change and social process for Elias, then, lies in interdependency and the existence of bonds between people. Such bonds can be violent, unequal, competitive, and exploitative; can include altruism, cooperation and so on. However, to a large extent people share similar needs and wants, with the result that many different forms of relationships or interdependencies can come into existence. The very core of social life is that individuals are bonded together and people can only be understood in terms of the “various figurations to which they have belonged in the past and which they continue to form in the present” (Goudsblom, 1977: 7).

For Elias, the way in which a “person decides and acts has been developed in relationships to other people, in a modifying of his [sic] nature by society” (Elias, 1987/2010: 55). Society for Elias must be understood as constituted by individuals, and the institutions and organizations and more generally the social structures of any society do not exist ‘over our heads’, but are composed of interdependent individuals in figural associations: “The root of all misunderstandings on the relation of individual and society lies in the fact that while society, the relations between people, has a structure and regularity of a special kind that cannot be understood in terms of the single individual, it does not possess a body, a ‘substance’ outside individuals” (Elias, 1987/2010: 61). As a consequence, Elias’s social theory provides a set of interlocking conceptual tools which move sociology away from any narrow focus to the more general matter of how we relate to one another and what this entails. It thus offers a “robustly secular and realistic picture of the predicament of humankind in a hostile cosmos which, once made plain, may for many people be hard to take” (Kilminster, 2007: x). In addition, while particular ideas or concepts may not be unique to Elias,

What makes this approach so powerful is the combination or synthesis of what is currently spread across a variety of sociological perspectives – structuralism, symbolic interactionism, conflict theory, historical sociology, theories of the state and state formation. A number of commentators have spoken of the fragmentation of sociology as a discipline. What Elias offers is not a ‘solution’ to that problem, but a set of sensitising concepts, an orientation to how one thinks about and practices sociology with the potential to draw many of the various threads of sociological thought together” (Van Krieken, 1998: 7).

Elias (1987/2010) promoted an approach to social change and society that would produce a more ‘reality-congruent’ knowledge. To cross the chasm between individual and society, Elias developed the concept of the figuration, understood as evolving groups of interdependent people linked by some shared purpose. This concept avoids both determinism and voluntarism as it circumvents viewing history as either ‘the net outcome of human rationality and conscious planning’, or as a mere flow of unstructured and directionless ‘chaos’ by focusing on flows over time (Dunning and Hughes, 2013: 46-47). The central tenet of Elias’s concept of figuration is that

human beings are in no way separate from each other; there is no such thing as an ‘individual’ in the way ordinarily understood, as isolated (*homo clausus*) (Elias, 1978/2012: 123-128; 1939/2012: 494-527). Rather, the boundaries between people are far fuzzier because from birth we are interwoven into multiple figurations which shape our actions, thoughts and character and which we in turn shape to some degree. In this way, humans are fundamentally orientated towards and dependent on each other throughout their lives, and as such exist as pluralities, in figurations (Elias, 1939/2012).

Figuration is not, however, the same as a social network or an elite, for in figurations there are no clear boundaries; a figuration has members at different ‘levels’ and a changing membership over time; the individual ‘nodes’ and ‘ties’ cannot be separated and thus cannot be realistically represented as such. Instead, better analogies (both mentioned in Elias’s writing) are a dance or football game. In both cases, the people present may not know each other, but in spite of this, each action/decision or lack thereof influences everyone else in the game or dance (Elias, 1939/2012: 481-482; Elias and Dunning, 1966). This interweaving of individual actions leads to something that has a ‘life’ of its own, where the dance or football game exists independently of the specific individuals that compose it, but not independent of individual people as such (Elias, 1939/2012: 481-482). In this way, Elias used the analogy of a dance or a football game (as opposed to machines, organisms or cybernetic systems) to emphasise the complexities and non-static nature of social relations (Dunning, 1999: 242). Process sociology is concerned with understanding webs of figural interconnections that are characterised by power ratios, cooperation, conflict and the sometimes planned and sometimes unplanned outcomes of the interweaving of people and groups.

The idea of the figuration has nothing to do with scale, or with cooperation, or with rational/strategic action. Figuration focuses on the way in which human actions become intertwined as a result of shared or competing interests and how this intertwining of individuals and groups of individuals takes on a life of its own. As such, it does not make much sense to focus on individuals or even on aggregates of individuals, but rather, the focus should be on the relational nature of social life (Elias, 1978/2012).

What is called social structure is, from Elias’s viewpoint, nothing more (or less) than large figurations and so does not exist as structures ‘over our heads’ but as vast sets of interconnected people with shared purposes, with actions over time that intertwine and which, through this intertwining, appear structural. Figural sociology consequently emphasizes the importance of various societal structures without neglecting aspects of individual agency, and is thereby able to overcome the shortcomings associated with focusing on either aggregates of people, which loses view of human agency and process, or on the individual or group level, which often fails to take into account the centrality of pluralities in defining actions and outcomes (Elias, 1978/2012).

One of the major obstacles to understanding the social world is, according to Elias, the inadequacy of the tools of language used to describe it. If we speak of individuals or society, the former is saturated with ideas of an isolated individual, one which can be adequately perceived as somehow separate from the social environment. This belief, according to Elias, maintains itself because it is simplistic and easily graspable. He also argues that the idea of society or structure/social system suffers from exactly the opposite problem, whereby society is seen as lying outside of people and somehow practicing agency on its own account. Instead, Elias aimed to build a concept – the figuration – by bringing together a number of simple, important, though often neglected insights. First, society is composed of individuals. Every institution, organization or movement is composed of no more and no less than individuals and in no way exists independently of individuals. Second, people are social to their very core and act within social fields; so, not only are we ‘internally’ social, but our moment to moment actions occur in relation to others. Third, social life is by definition a process, and consists of a ‘one thing after another’. The ways in which societies change cannot be reduced to a timeless cause and effect schema, then, but occur as processes.

It is these processes as social regularities, tendencies and counter-tendencies that shape the structure and meaning of the social relationships that define the conditions for continuing processes. It is possible to speak of the ‘structure’ of figurations – something often done, though not by Elias – as networks of individuals. But this is only part of the story, as these are in a constant state of becoming or sociogenesis. What are usually called social structures are in fact not ‘structures’ in a literal sense, but those aspects of social life which have greater longevity than others. As any point in social life is the result of past processes, the processes which formed them and are pushing them in a certain direction are of central sociological interest. In addition, the way things are configured at any particular moment involves not only material or psychosocial elements, but also a deeply interwoven relationship between these. In other words, material conditions are the other side of the coin of psychosocial conditions.

However, just because time changes, this does not necessitate or cause material change. This is because, while social conditions may be characterized by greater or lesser degrees of tension relating to material conditions, power is fundamental to figurations and the maintenance of configurations of material resources and symbolic orders. Those who hold power usually hold both material power and symbolic power as legitimacy for their superior positions through prestige, entitlement, and self-worth. While societies usually have a large degree of continuity, they also change as the configurations of power play out in the relations within and between figurations.

The idea of the figuration can be applied to many different conceptual levels, from families to schools, towns, social strata or states (Elias, 1978/2012: 15), each composed of individuals, and

each taking on both material and psychosocial characteristics. These may be experienced by individuals, but they can be better understood as a joint enterprise and the result of a relationship between groups. Thus, schools and states are joint enterprises, as they in some sense are constituted by and serve those who constitute them, while class relationships are the result of the successful accumulation of wealth and cultural capital by one group at the expense of others. It is sometimes claimed that the idea of figuration is too general, as it can be applied to many different levels of social organization because ill-defined. However, the concept of the figuration should by definition be kept open, for its coining was meant to highlight the fundamentals which a reality-congruent sociological approach must take into account, not a 'model' or a substantive depiction but a starting point. Its key aspects for me are:

1. Individuals are psychologically formed by the character of the groups in which they exist.
2. Such things will also differ within groups as there are many different levels or fields at play.
3. These differences are importantly shaped by power differences, for power plays allow (some) individuals to define the terms on which they are defined and define themselves, as well as groups doing so. It is this emotional and material gratification and sense of fulfilment that produces much of the material and symbolic differences in society. This is also fundamentally relational, for it occurs in relation to other individuals and groups.
4. Human beings act in social worlds or fields in which they are constrained as well as enabled.
5. As habitus and material conditions are formed and changed through processes, understanding social change requires an understanding of such processes.
6. Human thought is composed of both reality-congruent ideas and fantasies, which people struggle to differentiate between. As some fantasies become more reality-congruent, they do in such cases cease to dictate behaviours (as in the killing of witches), while others persist and do so to the extent of Elias commenting that "the whole of history has so far amounted to no more than a graveyard of human dreams" (Elias, 1978/2012: 28).
7. These processes are very rarely the result of the wishes of an individual person or group, but occur as the outcome of multiple interests and the relative degree of power these have in relation to others acting within the same field to realise things that matter to them.
8. Because individual and group interests differ as well as the ratios of power between them, social processes are complicated and not determined as it is not possible to define outcomes totally.

What is clear is that a figuration is composed of key points or insights which are foundational and can be used to sensitise and structure thought when conducting empirical research into social change. It is not possible to define a figuration as precisely as one might an organisation, group and so on. It is not intended as a description but a broad framework that encompasses the social mechanisms that need to be taken into account. As Mennell (2007) states, “if one looks at human beings from a sufficiently high level of abstraction, they and their societies all look alike. If one chooses a very low level of abstraction, the difference between human groups are so numerous that any pattern is lost in a mass of detail”. In order to understand why they differ, Elias proposes a theory with figuration at its core to explain how things came to be what they are. The specific configurations of each figuration will differ because resulting from and shaped by their own historical trajectory, their own tendencies and counter-tendencies. All of these together are crucial to understanding societies and how they change.

There are some consequential implications of a figural approach for my research. In particular, the Randlords should not be viewed as isolated individuals, but instead as existing in complex chains of interdependence, dependent on others in their decision-making and actions. So in order to understand the part that the Randlords played in South Africa, the focus should not be on either individual Randlords or the Randlords as a ‘set’. Instead, it should be on the relational dynamics between the individuals and the figurations which structured dynamics and actions and formed the conditions for their rise or fall (Elias, 1989/2013: 139).

A key characteristic of figurations is that they are dynamic and processual. Returning to the analogy of the football game or dance, each ‘move’ cannot be understood if it is extracted from the game or dance; each move, each action, must be understood within and in relation to previous moves, which in turn shape future ones (Elias, 1978/2012; Elias and Dunning, 1966). In this way, figurations are not only deeply relational but also deeply processual, existing in a constant process of dynamic development. As a result, it does not make sense to speak in any narrow way of social change, or to use concepts which imply that non-changing social structures could exist (what Elias referred to as ‘process reduction’). Recognising the processual nature of social life also entails accepting that the artificial separation of the social world into separate fields of research (sociology, psychology, economics, history, politics) is misleading, and reality-congruent work should rather focus on the lives of actual people within larger groups and the relational dynamics between these levels.

In terms of the Randlords, this entails that the very idea of the Randlords (and also the bourgeoisie or an elite and so on) should not be understood as a ‘thing’, but a happening. That is, as a loosely defined group of individuals who share social experiences and perhaps traditions and value systems and who have a disposition to behave in shared ways as a class and so on (Thompson, 1978: 295). Thus, in order to understand the part the Randlords played in social change, not only

must the relational nature of social life be acknowledged, but also its inherently processual character. Researching the Randlords should not focus on the individuals or broad structural changes, but the relational processes of evolving figurations over time.

Figuration, then, is a heuristic device that emphasises that individuals are interdependent, and that the focus of sociology should be on the nature and unfolding consequences of these interdependencies. A figuration is based around ratios of power as opposed to the absolutist idea of either having or not having power. In addition, the idea of interdependency is value neutral; it includes people cooperating towards similar goals, and also situations where the interests or beliefs of individuals are conflicting and lead to a hostile interdependency.

An important feature of figurations is that they are organized around the dynamic operation of power and its ratios, a power structure that touches every associated individual within a figuration, and which arises from the interdependency of people in society. Every individual, no matter what their stature, is affected by this and is not free to act as they choose. Elias, in *The Court Society* (1983/2005), for instance, describes how King Louis XIV of France could retain power only by “carefully calculated strategy which was governed by the peculiar structure of court society in the narrow sense, and more broadly by society at large” (Elias, 1983/2005: 5). Elias attributes the power outcome for Louis XIV to a ‘royal mechanism’, whereby those within this figuration were caught up in a certain interdependency with the king, because they were as dependent on their positions for power and prestige as the king was on them (Elias, 1983/2005: 25). As such the king, as much as other people, was walking a tight-rope: “Just because the flexibility of this position and the scope for decisions it confers are particularly large, the possibility of error, rashness and derailment, which could in the long run lead to a reduction of power, is particularly acute” (Elias, 1983/2005: 26).

However, opportunities can and do arise for the structural relationships undergirding power relations to be challenged by those for whom a change would be in their self-interest. The job so to speak of those in power is to maintain or improve their positions or increase their power, and the job of other individuals and groups is to maintain their positions, and under certain conditions to seize opportunities to challenge existing power structures. The relative continuity of figurations arises from the interdependency of individuals on one another for their existing positions and which necessitates relating carefully to other people, while sudden or long-term changes within the structure of figurations can occur when opportunity arises and individuals exercise a greater degree of agency.

Thus, individuals and groups of individuals exist within social fields of power which exert compelling constraints, with these constraints being no more and no less than forces exerted by people over one another and over themselves (Elias, 1978/2012: 14-15). What these ideas add up

to is that, no matter how powerful or central an individual is, they are always dependent on the surrounding network of social, economic and political relations for their power, status or prestige, and this relationship is maintained by mutual dependence on others in the figurational relationship; and society thereby takes on a particular structure. Clearly, there are reverberations here for how to understand the activities and impact of the Randlords.

Each person exists within a particular social field at a certain point of time, and it is crucial to come to grips with the structure and nature of the relationships between people. Most broadly, it is necessary to gain some purchase on the existing power structure or the structural conditions which allow for such a position to exist. In addition, a distinction can be made between tensions within groups (a social elite, a family or corporation) and tensions between groups. While Elias never quite spells it out, tension is crucial, as it describes a particular relationship between social forces. Individuals can be said to have varying degrees of power, and so do other entities from companies and nations to ethnicities. At these different levels, and in different forms, the existence of other entities which share or dispute similar goals or interests can and does create tensions, whether economic, social or political. These tensions can in turn be understood as compelling forces; a company must act in relation to other companies, it must remain 'competitive', subsume a threat or be subsumed. South Africa in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is a prime example of the importance of such tensions and how the resolution of some at the time continue to shape the contemporary South African landscape.

The question remains, how are these ideas about tensions and competing forces conceptually useful? First, they offer a way of explaining action from a relational perspective, and second, they indicate conceptual levels at which to understand the role that individuals and groups can play in social change. For example, one of the Randlords I am interested in, George Farrar (1859-1915), made a push to import Chinese labour (discussed in particular in Chapter 3). Importing Chinese labour can be understood as an attempt to remedy a shortage of labour, but also as a tool to break the bargaining power that black workers were increasingly able to exert over the mining industry for higher wages. If the labour market could be saturated with cheap labour, the mining industry would be able to dictate wages and labour control to a higher degree and resolve a tension between capital and labour by shifting the balance of power in favour of capital.

Second, Farrar funded, formed and led a company of troops to fight in the First World War. While his influence in this latter tension may be negligible, it does indicate that individuals are involved at numerous levels, regarding different aspects, and are able to influence outcomes to varying degrees. However, 'tensions' and 'competing forces' operate at an abstract level within this framework of ideas, while Elias was also keenly interested in how these dynamics played out in grounded contexts. Here his thinking about the established and the outsiders comes into play.

Elias's *The Established and the Outsiders* (1965/2008), co-authored with one of his graduate students, John Scotson, is concerned with a general social phenomenon or 'universal regularity' regarding the formation of an established group and an outsider group. Within the neighbourhood called 'Winston Parva' in Leicester, Elias analyses how an established group actively excludes an outsider group. This includes an avoidance of contact, closing ranks against the outsider group, and the active stigmatisation of its members (Elias and Scotson, 1965/2008: 4). There were no other distinguishing characteristics between these groups, whether socio-economic, nationality, ethnic or other group differences, other than the length of time of residence in the community (Elias and Scotson, 1965/2008: 2). The established group were those whose families had been there for generations, while the outsider group were more recent arrivals.

Elias and Scotson found that the established group maintained their positions through two key figurational dynamics; exclusion and stigmatisation. The established group reserved social positions for one another, which in turn reinforced their cohesion and power, and also attached characteristics viewed as 'bad' to the outsider group and characteristics viewed as 'good' to the established one (Elias and Scotson, 1965/2008: 4). The 'good' characteristics were those taken from their most exemplary members and generalized to the whole group, while the 'bad' characteristics of the outsider group were those associated with its most undesirable members but also generalized. This enabled the established group to convey to themselves as well as to others that this group difference was in fact real. Why they did so relates to the 'oldness' of association. As these families had known each other for generations, a degree of group cohesion and a commonality of norms created a 'we'-image (Elias and Scotson, 1965/2008: 22). Individual identity and ideas of self-worth are intimately tied to the groups that people associate with, and those in the established group experienced a gratifying euphoria from belonging to a group with more power (Elias and Scotson, 1965/2008: 4).

This sense of superiority acts as a justification for their elevated position to an established group, and the experience of inferiority by the outsider group reinforces their outsider position to them (Elias and Scotson, 1965/2008: 12). As an established group forms, through growing group cohesion around a common mode of living and a set of norms and attributes, so membership requires submission to these and an appropriate control of affect (Elias and Scotson, 1965/2008: 9). Each member must constrain their conduct to the normative, with people willing to do so due to the feelings of worth and superiority they receive from belonging (Elias and Scotson, 1965/2008: 9). These beliefs have real material consequences regarding patterns of economic and social status, and the ability of a more powerful group to stigmatize less powerful ones influences the groups and also their members sense of self-worth.

Winston Parva was particularly interesting to Elias as a small-scale example of other established-outsider relations (which for Elias also included race, class, gender, nationality), albeit one where

the usual mechanisms of power, such as legitimate violence, control of the means of production and so on, were not utilized. In addition, there were no characteristics of the two groups which could obscure the underlying power tension, such as 'race', class, or ethnic group. As Wouters points out, at the time of its writing there was a wide-ranging academic discussion of elites and 'who runs Britain?' (Wouters, 2008: 11). The approach that Elias developed was intended to be applicable to a wide range of changing power balances, from class to 'race', colonized and colonizers, men and women, parents and children, because one of the most commonly recurring features of human societies is the existence of some form of inequality. The underlying argument is that these inequalities are not reducible to the characteristics by which they are named, but can be better understood as established-outsider relationships with particular ratios of power and tension. Again, there are powerful reverberations for how to think about labour and 'race' relations in South Africa regarding the activities of the Randlords.

Theories which attempt to explain power relations just in terms of material factors fail to recognise the figurational aspects of power. Crucial to the established and outsider approach is that it does not view either group as right or wrong; it is not a normative theory. Instead, the focus is on the structural characteristics that result in one group treating another group collectively round ascribed characteristics, and the resulting means by which they treat another group as of lower or higher value (Elias and Scotson, 1965/2008: 7). In addition, Elias's approach also posits that there is no 'starting point' to these power ratios, which are fundamentally processual; and also the degree of exclusion can differ from complete to partial, depending on the ratios of power between groups and how these change over periods of time (Elias and Scotson, 1965/2008: 224-225). Tensions may exist between groups for extended periods of time, and outsider groups may direct pressure on established groups, while established groups aim to preserve or increase the power differential (Elias and Scotson, 1965/2008: 22). However, this also depends on group self-perception, with resistance more likely where outsider groups have a positive sense of group identity or have held positions of dominance in the past. This has close links with Elias's thinking about social change more broadly and his ideas about civilizing and de-civilizing processes specifically.

Elias discusses both civilizing and de-civilizing processes in society in *The Civilizing Process* (1939/2012), and that these depend largely on the ratios of power between groups. He argues that the concept of civilization develops through tensions and rivalries between groups, showing how in Germany the development of the concepts of 'Zivilization' and 'Kultur' developed within the larger context of the formation of group identities both within Germany and between Germany and other nations (Fletcher, 1997: 7). In relation to the established and outsiders, if a dominant group is able to completely dominate forms of power and successfully impose stigmas on outsider groups, then they are essentially 'de-civilizing' an outsider group while increasingly 'civilizing'

their own group through a higher demand for self-fashioning. Thus, power balances not only have material consequences as poverty, inequality, gender imbalances and so on, but have equally real implications for the belief structures of groups and the people who compose it. As Elias and Scotson (1965/2008: 22) point out, the idea of people acting rationally fails to explain much of these processes. It is possible to make an argument that individuals seek power for the material benefits it accrues on them; but rationality cannot fully explain the emotional gratification and individual and group fantasies that also underpin group dynamics. Explaining processes within society, especially those of a de/civilizing nature, has to grapple with such factors. In order to understand the direction in which societies change, an understanding of rising and declining groups is required. Established and outsider groups can therefore be understood as having a joint enterprise, that of strengthening the position of the group not only regarding material benefits but also emotional self-evaluations and how people feel about themselves.

ELIAS, SOUTH AFRICA AND RANDLORDS

Until the later nineteenth century, South Africa witnessed a complex interplay between different groups, changes in the relationship of which played a major role in how things eventuated. Elias's ideas about the established and outsiders help in understanding the dynamics of ethnicity and 'race', but also regarding the rising white elite, new international capital and the elites governing this, and the role they played in defining the power ratios and dealing with tensions between groups. Between approximately 1870 to 1930, there was a change in the power ratios between black and white groups, between British and Boer groups, a shift to a more centralized state, and an increase in the dominance of capital in the structure of economy and society (Etherington, 2001; Wheatcroft, 1985; Feinstein, 2005; Lester, Nel and Binns, 2000).

South Africa had been composed of a mix of political units with no centralized power, with divisions at numerous levels. However, the discovery of diamonds and gold introduced a massive change by creating the ground on which new forms of stratification could occur which cut through existing ethnic and other tensions, frequently indeed increasing these. Elias's established-outsider ideas provide a useful way to view the many layered systems and ratios of power that existed and how they interacted. Prior to diamonds and gold, there was no economic basis sufficiently hierarchical, capital intensive and competitive for an overarching elite group based on finance to arise. The elites were of the competing local colonial, farming and independent polity types. However, diamonds and gold introduced a new basis of power, a means for a group to form that was able to redefine the agendas of existing sources of power. Changes in the power relations of groups inevitably brings a widespread feeling of uncertainty to many caught up in the turmoil of change (Elias, 1989/2013: 29). These groups, and the forward and backward plays of power

between them, not only relate to the material benefits accrued to victors, but also to the fears and identity of people, including the established group too.

Black people became outsiders, though with changing ratios of power. By the end of the nineteenth century, the conflict for established positions occurred largely between the British and Boer colonists, infused by the new source of power in the discovery of diamonds and gold. The introduction of this new source of power and the establishment of new power groups meant a new source through which existing tensions and balances of power could be influenced. The rapid – albeit enclave – industrialization of South Africa resulted in the new entrepreneurs becoming an established group, a new elite figuration (see Elias, 1989/2013: 471 for discussion on Germany). Within this, white people as part of the established had sufficient resources to treat black people with a measure of negativity or contempt. However, as whites actively required black people as labour, they were caught in a double bind (Elias and Scotson, 1965/2008: 16). This was due to the ability of workers to exert power through the withholding of labour. The destruction of tribal chiefdoms was aimed at the creation of a new balance of power of unequal interdependency. However, to a degree the de-civilizing process imposed on South Africa's original inhabitants was never completed, and instead took the form of changing ratios of power differentials (Keegan, 1997). The new group of entrepreneurs influenced these long-term processes. Their placement at the pinnacle of the established group at a time of rapid and profound social change meant that they were able to influence how these tensions would be dealt with and so how power and resources were distributed between different groups.

Elias's established-outsider ideas point to the ways in which individuals with similar positions form groups in order to protect their perceived interests from others who they feel could potentially threaten them, and has considerable utility in thinking about South Africa. It provides a useful tool to conceive of how groups form and why they can take on systems of thought, patterns of exclusion and means of stigmatisation specific to their particular grouping. In addition, there is a field of research concerned with the power relationships between groups in terms of those who sit at the pinnacle; namely, elite theory. In this tradition, elites can either be defined as those who occupy a dominant position within social relations, or in terms of groups and the power and resources they possess (Khan, 2012: 362). Today, the former is usually associated with Mills's (1956) power elite ideas, and the latter with Hunter's (1953) power structure research, although there are considerable overlaps between them.

The idea that societies can be viewed in terms of single or multiple elites was a central concern for research through much of the twentieth century, and by the 1980s there was a substantial body of literature (for example Dooley, 1969; Bunting and Barbour, 1971; Mintz, 1975; Allen, 1978; Useem, 1984). However, more recently the emphasis on elites in general has faded and been largely replaced by studies of business elites (see Scott, 1997; Carroll, 2004) and interlocking

directorships (see Cox and Rogerson 1985 for an analysis of the South African corporate elite; also Cronin 2011; Brayshay, Cleary and Selwood, 2006; Ritter and Gemunden, 2003; Bune and Csanadi, 2007).

While much research on elites has been conducted in the United States, Dogan (2003) has helpfully brought together studies on national elites from France, Germany, Britain, Mexico, East-Central Europe, Southeast Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. Dogan concludes that elites vary from country to country, and this variation is due to specific historical developments, institutional frameworks and levels of economic development. This diversity of national elite configurations challenges Mills's theory of an integrated power elite, which appears from a comparative perspective to be particular to the United States during the early-post war period. However, at the same time Dogan's research indicates that South Africa during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had an elite structure similar in some respects to that of Mill's power elite.

The power elite is the small group of individuals who sit at the pinnacle of the major economic, political and military institutions within US society, and have more wealth, power and prestige gained by virtue of their high positions in major institutions and organizations (Mills, 1956: 9). The people who hold these positions compose a top social stratum; they know one another and socialize with one another, and importantly, in making key decisions they take one another into account (Mills, 1956: 11). Not only are they members of particular groups, but they feel themselves to be and are a "more or less compact social and psychological entity; they have become self-conscious members of a social class" (Mills, 1956: 11). As a result, power is concentrated in the hands of a small group of people, and the course of events depends somewhat more on specific human decisions and somewhat less on broader processes or structures, with the concentration of power directly correlated with the power and magnitude of individual decisions.

This group of people have an awareness of "impersonal decision-making with intimate sensibilities shared with one another" (Mills, 1956: 15). However, this directly depends on the degree to which the major institutions and organizations within society are interrelated. If they are disjointed or scattered, then so are the elites; but if they have interconnections and points of coinciding interest, then the elites can form a coherent group. And the more cohesive an elite is, the more influence it likely could exert over events or processes. This elite view of the established group is helpful in exploring whether and to what extent the Randlords were part of a broader elite figuration in South Africa; and investigating and mapping the character of this elite or figuration assists in understanding the influence they had on social change in South Africa.

SOCIAL CHANGE AND SOUTH AFRICA: AN ELIASIAN FRAMEWORK

As noted earlier, prior to the discovery of diamonds and gold in South Africa (loosely defined as the geographic area now inside its political boundaries), society there was composed of an array of primary figurations; British colonists, Boers (Afrikaners), and large ethnic bodies of indigenous people (eg. Zulu, Matabele, Xhosa) who vastly outnumbered the incoming whites. Each protected their relative autonomy through the potential for, in their own eyes legitimated, violence. Power was relatively equally distributed amongst the groups. Diamonds and gold changed this by introducing a commodity which could confer great power on those who controlled the financial wealth accrued through the mines, and which commodity existed in enclaves which had fundamentally different divisions of labour and systems of control from those prevailing outside them. This drove the massive development of Kimberley and Johannesburg, largely fuelled by the material needs of the white elites. The rapid formation of centralized mining and financial organizations radically shifted the ratios of power between groups, and also enhanced the determination of the established groups to maintain and consolidate their power. This encompassed the involvement of finance capital, the destruction of the power bases of ethnic polities through warfare and the creation of a subjugated proletariat to feed the increasing demands for cheap labour, labour practices which involved increasing control, and the penetration of these new bases of power into many facets of social life in South Africa. By 1910, power in South Africa had been monopolised by a single state in a country characterised by increasing division of labour and increasingly complex chains of interdependence, tailored to the interests of the established white group. By the mid-1920s, labour organisations were segregated, white labour interests were seen as linked with the established elite, and the capacity of black labour organizations to act had been severely restricted by extreme state legitimated violence backing highly punitive legislation.

At the centre of these events and at the apex of the major institutions and organizations involved were the Randlords, with the potential to influence many political, social and economic matters. The specificities of the South African case include the existence of disparate and competing figurations whose interests at times competed and at others coalesced, two 'first world' cities within an agricultural society, highly powerful economic institutions which were interwoven, and a powerful international economic elite. From an Eliasian perspective, how did this come about, in what ways did power ratios shift over time, what role did the Randlords play in this, and what did these things entail for social change in South Africa?

Elias's framework provides a helpful way of thinking about this. The idea of figurations prevents focusing too closely on individuals (which often leads to methodological individualism), and also prevents over-emphasising human agency (which fails to take into account how figurations share

the conditions for and constrain action and shape the individual). This means that sociological research can ‘use’ individuals as entry points into figurations, but what is of prime interest should be the webs of relationships and how particular people are interwoven within them over time, and what this interweaving means for how things turned out. Therefore, research should be specifically interested in the ever-shifting and evolving nature of key figurations over time, and how these dynamics and the order of events shape how things turn out. Elias’s framework also offers an explanatory means of understanding how groups gain and maintain positions of power, and thus why something resembling a power elite arose in South Africa, and how dynamics within this elite are likely to have influenced key decisions, and so potentially how it turned out. And relatedly, his thinking about civilizing and decivilizing processes is fundamental to understanding figurations, established and outsider dynamics and changing power ratios.

In *The Established and the Outsiders*, Elias explains how people are motivated to remain within established groups in spite of the controls on their behaviour, because of the benefits and sense of self-worth they receive from being in a group that is able to achieve and practice higher levels of ‘civility’. For Elias, these things constitute habitus. In order to study social change, some measure of change is required, and also some explanation of why the change has occurred should be sought. In *On the Process of Civilization* (1939/2012), Elias is concerned with how changes in social structures (levels of state formation, degree of differentiation and integration) influence personality structures or character over long periods of time as a component of the same long-term developments (Elias, 1939/2012: 496). Part of this involves how habitus changes over time, connecting local changes to structural changes in society as reciprocally constituting elements of the same process. As is well known, Elias did not mean ‘civilized’ or ‘civilization’ in the conventional or popular sense, but rather used the concept of civilizing as a heuristic device to frame a tendency for people to exercise increasing amounts of self-control over themselves, and also to exercise increasingly complex standards of behaviour. However, more generally, Elias used the term to designate changes in habitus over time. For him, these changes occur as societies go through advancing stages of integration: they become more differentiated (Elias, 1939/2012: 495-496), as the social as well as economic divisions of labour increase. As part of this, some behaviours and people are viewed socially as more ‘civilized’ than others, indicating a higher status group.

For Elias, the changes that occur are not simply driven by economic or political goals, but also by the ideas groups have of themselves and others, and the knowledge that failure would entail being subsumed by another figuration. Through this process, group identities form within and between people and give rise to group personality structures (Elias, 1939/2012: 480). As increasing numbers of people become subsumed within figurations, they become interlocked or interwoven within a figuration with a certain habitus, that is, shared ideas about how to ‘be’ as particular

kinds of people sharing a ‘civilized’ and superior way of life. Although a society may hold certain values, it is usually the case that only certain established groups are able to attain higher levels of civility. Thus, there is both a general figural habitus, and also smaller social fields within figurations based on the way in which material resources are organized and distributed within a society.

For Elias, the material basis of relationships is intimately tied to the personality structure of individuals (Elias, 1939/2012: 496). Yet this is in no way static; as social structure changes (sociogenesis), so do the personality structures of individuals within a figuration (psychogenesis). In *On the Process of Civilization* (1939/2012), Elias used manners as represented in etiquette manuals as a proxy for gauging these changes in personality structures, showing among other things that there was a directional tendency towards integration and the formation of larger and larger figurations. As these became larger, and people became more and more interdependent within these figurations, so established groups required means to distinguish themselves and legitimate their positions. This was closely bound up for Elias with claims about ‘civility’, which for him reflects the self-consciousness of the West, especially its dominant groups, and is as such connected with power differentials. The concept “sums up everything in which Western society of the last two or three centuries believes itself superior to earlier societies or ‘more primitive’ contemporary ones” (Elias, 1939/2012: 5). What constitutes ‘civilized’ behaviour is by definition normative and will inevitably differ in time and place. However, the general trajectory is towards a restraint on human impulses, whether sexual or violent, as well as the gradual compartmentalization of uncivilized behaviour, as in toilets and bedrooms, and of individuals, as in prisons, mental institutions and living areas for the poor.

This civilizing process is not innate. Human beings do not, according to Elias, possess innate drive and affect controls, although the conversion of social restraints into self-restraints is a universal feature of human societies, and exists in continuous interaction with countervailing de-civilizing processes. Being born and educated within a particular figuration therefore entails learning a specific configuration of what ‘civilization’ in this context entails, a habitus and ideas concerning what is valuable and desirable, and specifying who is equal and human. Over long time periods, ideas about civility change depending on the particular direction of processes of civilization. Impulse control is not the only criteria of civilization, for many examples of high levels of self-control can be found in ancient civilizations. However, the ability of people to identify and empathise with other people also increases (Elias, 2008: 7), so that de-civilizing processes can be seen in a reduction in the ability of people to empathise with other groups. The existence of racial inequality and discrimination in South Africa could not have occurred as it did if there was not a decrease or prior lack of empathy for these groups. White people simply did not

identify or equate themselves with black people, for if they had done so then maintaining this inequality would not have been sustainable.

The civilizing process was thus not intended as a progress theory of human history, for it also recognises de-civilizing processes. In *Studies on the Germans* (1989/2013), Elias describes how, even though Germany in the early twentieth century experienced a high degree of integration and was characterised by high degrees of ‘civilized’ modes of behaviour, there was nonetheless a breakdown of civilizing. He comments that under National Socialism there was “a latent tendency to let oneself go, to loosen the grip of one’s own conscience, to roughness and brutality, which as long as the external constraint of state control remained intact, could come out at most informally in the private interstices of the network of state control, became formalized and, for established groups, elevated to a type of behaviour both demanded and supported by the state” (Elias, 1989/2013: 445).

While the state exercises a monopoly over violence, a high level of civility and affect control is increasingly exercised by more people within a population. However, the breakdown here involved what De Swaan (2001: 269) calls ‘dycivilizing’, involving “compartments of destruction and barbarism, in meticulous isolation, almost invisible and well-nigh unmentionable. It is as if the civilizing process continues with the same means, but with a different turn: in one word, it has become a dycivilizing process”. Another way to think about this is that, while a process of civilizing is occurring in terms of detachment, rationalization and bureaucratization, there is in tandem the occurrence of de-civilizing process with affective empathy towards certain groups declining, with these people gradually viewed as non-equal, of less human worth. In such situations, while the majority of a population may experience equality under the law and freedom from violence, other groups do not and instead may experience the full violence of the state and established groups, because they are denied their status as part of humanity.

This occurs as a process whereby the beliefs of the established group change towards another group: over time, a dominant group that believes that an outsider group is of less than human worth will see this as legitimizing violence and hatred towards that group. For Elias, these social conditions are the result of long term social processes which form a habitus with specific de-civilized characteristics existing within and sometimes predominating over the broader civilized behaviour tradition (Elias, 1989/2013). The question then is whether South Africa and its transitions, from a scatter of independent chiefdoms and colonial outposts to rudimentary ethnic states, to the 1910 Union of South Africa, to the 1948 National Government and apartheid, to the introduction of a democratic government in the early 1990s, can be seen in civilizing or de-civilizing terms. The most appropriate response in Eliasian terms is, both.

For Elias, social change is the result of human actions in figural contexts, and the changes that societies experience are often due to intentional changes through planning and purpose; but also there are many others that are unanticipated and unintended (Weinstein, 2005: 7). Relatedly, social change arises from the micro and meso levels, with the macro being formed from these levels. In this sense, social changes on the macro level can only be explained by analysing the links between the different levels. But even though investigating social change is a touchstone of sociology, and there is a plethora of different theories attempting to explain its origins and drivers, key questions concerning how societies change, how rapidly and in what direction, and by whom or what mechanisms of change, have still not been fully addressed (Vago, 1980:1; Demeulenaere, 2011; Haferkamp and Smelser, 1992; Barkey, 2009).

Early figures in sociology did attempt to establish causal links between social change and other social phenomena, including belief structures and religion (Weber), the division of labour (Durkheim) and production technology (Marx) (Jamrozik, Boland, Urquhart, 1995; Haferkamp and Smelser, 1992). However, as there is no commonly accepted theory of social change, so there is also no commonly accepted definition of what it consists in. According to Vago (1980), social change means “that large numbers of persons are engaging in group activities and relationships that are different from those in which they or their parents engaged in some time before”. According to Gerth and Mills (1953: 398), social change refers to “whatever may happen in the course of time to the roles, the institutions, or the orders comprising a social structure, their emergence, growth and decline”. Social change may thus refer to changes in the social structure (Ginsberg, 1958; Moore and Sheldon, 1968), or in changes in relationships and the way in which individuals relate to one another (Landis, 1974), or a combination of the two (Edari, 1976). For Elias, social change is fundamentally the result of the interweaving of groups of individuals (dynamics within figurations), the outcome of conflicts, cooperation, leading to intentional as well as unintentional changes in society, and it is these changes which we call social change (Elias, 1987/2010: 9-10).

Because social change is such a broad under-developed concept, the way in which it is defined depends on what dimensions are of particular interest. In my research, there were particular changes in South African society likely to have been influenced by the Randlords in various ways. These include the relationships between different ‘racial’ and ethnic groups (black/white, Boer/British) (from labour relations, to power differentials), the relation between capital and political entities/state(s), the gradual centralization of power and the unification of South Africa, economic developments and their direction, social policy and legislation and proletarianization, industrialization. The influence of the Randlords regarding one or more of these could be tracked through institutions, organizations or other figurations. This might appear as unplanned outcomes, but in some instances there might have been more direct planned involvements and unplanned

outcomes (the Jameson Raid and its outcomes leading to the South African War is a case in point). Consequently it is not possible to define precisely what dimensions or sub-processes within these larger spheres of action the Randlords might have influenced without having researched them in detail. This is the substantive basis of my project and raises the question of what body of data is most appropriate and available for exploring specific changes over time, which is discussed in Chapter 2.

What is likely to be the result of such research is that these men influenced in different ways some social processes, and some of these more than others, rather than having directed or created them, for many of the major changes were in some sense ‘imported’ to South Africa, from beliefs and practices to ‘guns, germs and steel’ (Diamond, 1997). The ethnic chiefdoms of indigenous African peoples were there before the Randlords existed, the gold and diamonds were there, and also the drive for diamonds and gold as well as finance capital. But, it is widely suggested that these men did, by virtue of their positions, influence many processes of social change, and the character and extent of this influence is what is of interest to me. Exploring and understanding it requires a “somewhat more modest starting point” because the “social processes of which one seeks to construct a model are not only unplanned but also unfinished” (Elias, 1989/2013: 92), and this requires marshalling a wide range of evidence and particularly what was earlier referred to as ‘documents of life’, and discussed later.

While most social changes are the result of a multitude of factors, it is possible to specify mechanisms which are likely in varying combinations, and to varying degrees, to be the causes of change. These broadly include technology, ideology, competition, conflict, political and economic factors, and structural strains (Vago, 1980: 91; Sztompka, 1994). For Elias, while there are shorter episodes of planned, intentional social change, much of it is unplanned and results from the interweaving of individuals and groups of individuals with very different intentions and actions, and it is the outcome of these figurational dynamics that constitutes social change. It involves people in the figurations where technology develops, where competition occurs, where conflict and cooperation arises; and it is these dynamics within figurations that are, for Elias, the drivers of social change:

Plans and actions, the emotional and rational impulses of individual people, constantly interweave in a friendly or hostile way. This basic tissue resulting from many single plans and actions of men [sic] can give rise to changes and patterns that no individual person has planned or created. From this interdependence of people arise an order *sui generis*, an order more compelling and stronger than the will and reason of the individual people composing it. It is this order of interweaving human impulses and strivings, this social order, which determines the course of historical change (Elias, 1939/2012: 366).

While risking constructing straw figures, theories of social change can be separated into evolutionary theories (classic and neo-evolutionism), theories of modernization (which overlap significantly with the former), theories of historical cycles, historical materialism, and the idea of

social change as the product of human agency as epitomized by historical sociology (Sztompka, 1994:99; Noble, 2000: 40-70; Weinstein, 2005: 30-50). Most of these approaches persist today in some form, but are problematic in terms of an Eliasian perspective.

Charles Tilly (1984) argues directly against ‘Pernicious Postulates’ which originated in nineteenth century thinking and continue to bedevil many approaches to social change. Here I will discuss those that are particularly relevant in Eliasian terms.

First, the idea that society is a thing apart whereby the world can be accurately subdivided into discrete societies is a mistake for, while nations and states do exist in a political sense, there is no ‘society’ that “somehow exercises social control and embodies shared conceptions of reality” (Tilly, 1984: 12). South Africa epitomizes this, for much of South African history can be better seen as the meeting of different political entities, with different ideologies, technologies, intentions and internal dynamics. To speak of ‘South African’ society can be understood as the specification and imposition of a homogenous state formation under a single national banner, but with many pre-existing fault-lines remaining in its internal dynamics even now.

Second, the idea that social change is a “coherent general phenomenon, explicable *en bloc*” (Tilly, 1984: 11) is also problematic. There is no single recurrent social process governing all large-scale social change. Instead, social change can best be viewed as a general descriptive label glossing different processes which transform very different aspects of any society, as a “catchall name for very different processes varying greatly in their connection to each other” (Tilly, 1984: 12). In the South African case, the ‘minerals revolution’ drove associated industrialization, which in turn required vast quantities of labour, which added a further compelling force for ‘breaking’ the bases of power of African chiefdoms, which led to the creation of migrant flows of labour, which in turn changed the structure, workings and affective bonds of many African households. These changes are not conterminous but they are interrelated and resulted from varying degrees of intentional action and unplanned consequences, with no single originating cause.

Third, the idea that all societies go through a number of developmental stages, each more advanced than the previous, is flatly wrong, because:

Stage theories of social change assume an internal coherence and standardization of experiences that disappear at the first observation of real social life ... many large-scale processes of change exist: urbanization, industrialization, proletarianization, population growth, capitalization, bureaucratization all occur in definable, coherent ways. Social change does not (Tilly, 1984: 41).

Many societies do have features which are similar; for instance, technology is likely to transform societies in broadly similar ways, and the underlying drivers are similar. This can give the impression of an evolutionary or a stage-like character to social change. But there are many other disparate processes which shape the direction of change, resulting from the relationships between

people and groups of people. South Africa would be a very different place if groups did not draw distinctions between themselves, if power ratios between groups were distributed differently, if there were no distinctions made between men and women or black and white, or if those who held economic and political power were different. Certainly technology, population growth and other well-defined aspects of social change often follow fairly predictable patterns, but societies also change as a result of the way in which groups of individuals form ideas about themselves and others and act on these beliefs, and more precisely the way in which figurations of people interweave over time.

Fourth, there is the belief that differentiation forms the dominant, inevitable logic of large-scale change. While differentiation is an important aspect of change, no process is fundamental and; “in a given era, specific historical processes dominate the changes occurring in a given population or region” (Tilly, 1984: 49). In addition, many social processes involve de-differentiation (such as the development of the nation-state, language standardisation), and processes of differentiation have little to do with other central processes such as capital concentration or imperialism. With the development of the mining and extraction industries in South Africa, increasing differentiation did occur, and the existence of the urban areas created increasing demand for other goods, which in turn created the demand required to stimulate differentiation further in other sectors. But these changes were also the result of other changes, as previously discussed, and occurred while these other equally important changes were occurring.

Elias’s approach offers a set of theoretical tools and a general approach which can help explain the key sources of social change, namely the changing dynamics within and between figurations. These tools offer a means through which micro level phenomena can be linked with macro phenomena, and importantly, as moving and time-bounded processes. It is not and was not intended as a ‘grand theory’, but as a ‘preliminary to theory rather than theory itself’ (Merton, 1963: xxiv). Because social change is not a general process, nor does it follow any particular direction, and because many of the drivers of social change are situated in the relationship between people, the aim should be to build middle-range theories of social change which identify the micro-level foundations of the broader macro-level dynamics (Hedström and Udehn, 2009: 26-42). If the interest is in changes over time, and if the present is the outcome of historical processes, it is only really possible to understand the present by exploring history, or rather proxy measures of events occurring in particular past times. Sociologists have of course been successful in studying many present-term problems, but:

The range of explanations is unduly narrowed if inquiries are focused on contemporary problems. One cannot ignore the fact that every present society has grown out of earlier societies and points beyond itself to a diversity of possible futures. If we immured sociological problems in static typologies and static concepts of structure and function, we neglect the intrinsic dynamics of human societies (Elias, 1987/2010: 226).

Elias argued that sociologists are increasingly retreating into the present, which “constitutes just one small momentary phase within the vast stream of humanity’s development, which, coming from the past, debouches into the present and thrusts ahead towards possible futures” (Elias, 1987/2010: 224). It was from these insights that historical sociology emerged as a separate theoretical and methodological orientation which emphasised the importance of studying social change as a means of understanding both the origins of our contemporary world and the scope and consequences of current transformations (Sztompka, 1994; Lachmann, 2013; Elias, 1987/2010). As Tilly (2008: 120) has put it, “Sociology without history resembles a Hollywood set: great scenes, sometimes brilliantly painted, with nothing and nobody behind them”.

Historical sociology is a theory-driven approach to the past, concerned with the formation and transformation of the present (Delanty and Isin, 2003). It usually asks questions about social structures or processes which are concretely situated in time and space, takes temporal sequences seriously, focuses on the interplay between action and structural contexts in order to understand the planned and unplanned consequences of action, and highlights the particular and varying features of social structures and processes of change (Skocpol, 1984: 1-2). Historical sociology turns to history, or rather to the past and its connections with the present, for more satisfactory explanations of the contemporary social world, because history is able to provide deeper understandings of current social configurations (Abrams, 1982: 2; Skocpol, 1984). Recent thinking in historical sociology has moved the field out of its macro bedrock, towards finding more concrete ways of understanding the underlying intermediary mechanisms at work (Barkey, 2009: 716). In particular this involves “dissecting social processes while respecting their long-term continuity and unfolding”, instead of attempting to link macro states to macro outcomes (Barkey, 2009: 716).

One of the recent analytical turns in historical sociology has aimed to link the micro level with the macro, or rather with how “macro states at one point in time influence individuals’ actions, and how these actions bring about new macro states at a later point in time” (Bearman and Hedström, 2009: 7). This is related to Social Network Analysis (SNA). Though differing ontologically and methodologically, this has a similar concern to that of Elias’s figurational sociology, that individuals must be understood within a wider network (Barkey, 2009; Scott, 2000). The socio-metric basis of mainstream SNA leaves it unable to adequately deal with processes unfolding over lengthy periods of time; consequentially, while it is useful at producing snapshots and comparing these snapshots over time, it is less able to deal with the flow of history and events and processes. And while its actor-network variant (Latour, 2007) promises resolution, this still fails to cover long-term matters. In Eliasian terms, in addition, network remains a static and problematic concept.

For Abrams (1982: 3), process is the link between action and structure, and the shaping of action by structure and the transformation of structure by action both occur as processes in time. Clearly, this is consonant with an Eliasian approach. The configurations of existing structural frameworks establish the grounds of people's current actions, and current actions have the ability to shape how structures will be configured in the future, which in turn shape future action. If history, like society, has "no direction of its own accord, for it is shaped by the will of men and the choices they make" (Mousnier, 1973: 145), then many of the structural features of society cannot be understood as 'things', but instead as processual historical relationships. And like any relationship, there is a "fluency which evades analysis if we attempt to stop it dead at any given moment and anatomise its structure" (Thompson, 1963: 9). Thus, as Edward Thompson (1963: 9) has phrased it, "the finest-meshed sociological net cannot give us a pure specimen of [for example] class ... the relationship must always be embodied in real people and in a real context".

Abrams (1982: xv) argued that sociology is defined by 'two sociologies', one which focuses on individual and group action, and the other which is a sociology of social systems, with the two never quite coalescing. He also argued in very similar terms to Elias that the most promising way to overcome the structure and agency problematic is to see this relationship as a process in time, developing a sociology of process rather than of action or system in order to come to grips with the way in which individuals relate to social structures. The solution thus lies in treating the problem historically, "as a problem of understanding processes of becoming rather than states of being" (Abrams, 1982: xv).

More practically, the problem of understanding the relationship between the individual and society is "only a more precise version of the problem of accounting for individuals in general" (Abrams, 1982: xv). Treated as historical processes, as moments of social becoming, the focus is on groups and figurations and their relationship to processes of social change (Abrams, 1982: 267).

ELIAS AND 'FAIR PLAY' FOR THEORISTS

Sociology remains a contested subject, composed of a plurality of different perspectives or ways of knowing. Much of the differences between perspectives comes down to the body of ground rules or assumptions they hold, as well as the role theory should play. But even though there is such a diversity of perspectives in sociology, there remains a tendency in sociology to view it as a 'knowledge subject', one that systematically builds a body of knowledge over time and passes it on from one generation to the next, as in physics or biology. One consequence is that many disagreements have been driven by a belief that one framework of thought should dominate the discipline. But, as it stands, there is no basis on which to claim that one perspective in every

respect is superior to another, as the range of problems and interests that sociology raises cannot be reasonably subsumed within just one approach. Rather, different perspectives within sociology have different strengths and weaknesses, and offer analytical tools for understanding different aspects of the social world. As a consequence, Anderson, Hughes, Sharrock (1985) have suggested the need for ‘fair play’ for theorists and theories, an idea I now use regarding the response to Elias’s work.

To present different theories as rivals is not only to misunderstand where sociology stands at present, but also fails to comprehend that “what you see is not just dependent upon what there is, but also upon the point of view you take” (Anderson, Hughes, Sharrock, 1985: 58). No perspective at present is incontrovertibly superior, and so the choice of a theoretical underpinning should be based on how well it is suited to modelling and solving particular analytical problems. In addition, given the wide scope of sociological theorizing, it is often difficult to gain a firm grip on multiple perspectives, with the result that glosses and simplifications are often treated as exhaustive expositions of theories and as adequate grounds for critique.

What this adds up to is the need for a careful scrutiny of a chosen frame of reference, knowledge, and positionality when considering theoretical approaches dissimilar to our own. Habits of critique should shift from seeking fault-lines and the tendency to ‘throw the baby out with the bathwater’, to one where sociologists practice a ‘principle of charity’, the principle of fair play for theorists that Anderson, Hughes, Sharrock (1985) promote. By this they mean a theory should not be dismissed simply because it differs from our own ontological or epistemological viewpoint. We should rather seek to find reasons for what is being said and put effort into understanding the logic, focus and rationale of a theory. This requires acknowledging the partiality of our own theoretical stance, the adequacy of knowledge that any critique is based on, and whether the criticisms perceived are integral to the theory. ‘Fair play’ for theories, then, is to take theories on their own terms.

With regards to Elias’s work, the overall reaction has often been dismissive or even inappropriate commentaries (see for example, Leach, 1986: 13; Hunt, 1988: 30). Others have criticised the theory of the civilizing process as being racist (Wilterdink, 1984: 290), simplistic (Lasch, 1985: 714), an evolutionary theory (Lenhardt, 1979: 127; Giddens, 1984: 241) or for being unable to account for the ‘barbarism’ of the present century (Coser, 1978; Buck-Morss, 1978). Elias’s work, then, has been met by a fair share of misplaced critique (see for example Turner, 2004; Goudsblom, 2004; Goody, 2002; Robinson, 1987; Layder, 1986), and the literature overall can be separated into three broad approaches.

The first involves those who recognize that all theory is limited, and in order to build better theories it is necessary to have a firm grasp of what an author is trying to do and what they are

writing in relation to, and to offer constructive hints of how best to move these things forward. In relation to Elias, this camp includes in particular Turner (2004) and Goudsblom (2004). The second camp includes those who engage in nit-picking and adopt a negative, one-sided over-critical style which in effect criticizes a fish for not being a bicycle. Those that fall into this camp include Layder (1986) and Goody (2002), for whom the tendency is to view sociology as a 'knowledge subject', one that should be dominated by one framework, and who are unwilling to take theories on their own terms. The third camp is composed by more sustained evaluations which propose there are important omissions from Elias's work which damage his analysis of changes, specifically religion (Turner, 2004; Goudsblom, 2004) and technology (Turner, 2004), also that his analysis is Eurocentric (Goody, 2002; Turner, 2004; Mennell, 1992) and his approach is developmental or even evolutionary (Goody, 2002; Mennell, 1992; Armstrong, 1998). It is these latter evaluations I now comment on as important for my own work.

It has been proposed that religion and belief are key to understanding social change in European contexts and that Elias did not provide a substantial consideration of this (Turner, 2004; Goudsblom, 2004), and more contemporary research has also shown that religion is an important force in the processes of peace-building and post-conflict resolution (Brewer, 2010), something of relevance to considering the South African past. However, Elias argues that religion is only as 'civilized' as the society or class which upholds it (1939/2012: 169). Nonetheless, religion as an institutional organization that patterns the lives of individuals and moulds individual behaviour and identities (Fletcher, 1997: 20), is absent from his work. This is unfortunate as Elias could have strengthened his arguments by taking Weber's work on the Protestant Ethic more explicitly into account. Possible explanations are that Elias may have overlooked the importance of religion; that he disputed the influence of religion on the civilizing process of Western Europe, as Goudsblom (2004) suggests; or that he might have been more concerned with specifically secular institutions and processes (Russell, 1996). Certainly religion in the European context has historically included a strong pressure to self-restraint, but within and as part of wider social pressures; and also it has indeed been the basis for de-civilizing spurts (Goudsblom, 2004). In other words, religion is important in understanding the civilizing process, but is only an additional factor that should be taken into account and which will play out in different ways over time in different contexts and may have de-civilizing aspects as well.

Goody (2002) with some other anthropologists has suggested that some behaviour patterns in the West can also be found in societies without extended networks of interdependence and effective centralized monopolies of violence. While this may be so, the issues raised do not refute Elias's approach, but propose that its scope is restricted to particular levels of social size and complexity, and perhaps relevant only in the European context (Mennell, 1992: 232-3, in Fletcher, 1997: 177). It has also been suggested that technology, and more specifically military technology, has made

it possible for states in both peace and war to exercise a monopoly over violence to a degree that was simply impossible in previous less 'civilized' phases of society, and that it is a crucial factor in understanding conflict and change (Turner, 2004: 250). While Elias does not explicitly discuss technology, this is perhaps because technology is one variable among others in shaping the ratios of power between groups and between the state and individuals. Thus, its absence does not disrupt the theory, and violence is perhaps best seen as a subset of rationalization and detachment, a part of the civilizing process, and among the many factors producing social change.

Elias's work has also been seen as Eurocentric, because concerned mainly with explaining aspects of social change in European society and particularly Germany, France, Britain and Italy (Turner 2004: 250). It is certainly true that Elias extensively discussed Europe and his theoretical assumptions have Euro-focused qualities. However, he was specifically concerned with social change in Europe and attempts to explain why certain changes occurred in Europe, and with what consequences. Also, just because Elias focused on Europe does not by definition entail a Eurocentric view, which is one where the underlying assumptions assume standards of behaviour or moral/ethical precepts associated with Europe are superior to or more central than those of other parts of the world. Indeed, his work is concerned with explaining how the consciousness of the west changed over time and came to believe itself superior, and he emphasised that:

... western society seeks to describe what constitutes its special character and what it is proud of: the level of its technology, the nature of its manners, the development of its scientific knowledge or view of the world, and much more (1939/2012: 15).

Elias did not, in other words, take 'civilization' for granted but instead sought to explain how beliefs about this came about, the components of this particular configuration and degree of self-restraint, what it meant for Europeans in terms of their 'we-image', and what consequences all this had for the way in which groups on numerous levels interacted. Europe, then, was Elias's concern and focus, and it is an empirical question whether the theory is applicable to other contexts or not. This was the task Mennell (2007) undertook in relation to the USA and it is in part what my own inquiry about the South African context is concerned with, with Mennell's approach discussed in the next chapter.

The final critical approach to consider is that Elias has an inherently developmental or evolutionary approach to social change (Goody, 2002; Williams, 1991; Armstrong, 1998). It needs to be pointed out that many characteristics of social change in Europe did in fact take a particular direction in the long run, which Elias discusses in detail, but this does not presume a developmental or evolutionary undertone. Elias made it clear that societies develop through cultural differentiation, which means that changes are not 'givens' and are reversible even if some of the characteristics do seem to change in a particular direction (Dunning and Hughes, 2013). Elias's view is that European society gradually, with spurts and counter-spurts, came to be

composed of larger and larger units, also integration and differentiation increased, and a particular form of civility came to predominate that changed over time in a particular direction. This is neither a developmental nor an evolutionary view, but more nuanced and complex.

These latter points raise something interesting about how Elias defined the measuring rod or ideal type of civilizing and de-civilizing processes. While he did not explicitly express his thinking in ideal type terms, he seems to have had something like this in mind as part of differentiating civilizing and de-civilizing processes from each other. Mennell (1992: 236) suggests that the four crucial criteria for comparative purposes are presented in *The Court Society*:

1. “The number of routine contacts that people of different classes, ages and sex have at one stage of social development compared with another.
2. The number, length, density and strength of chains of interdependence which individual people form within a time – space continuum at one stage of development compared with another.
3. The central balance of tensions in society: the number of power centres increases with a growing differentiation of functions, and inequality in the distribution decreases (without disappearing).
4. The level of controls over (a) extra-human nature, (b) of people over each other, and (c) of each individual over him or herself. These too, says Elias, change in a characteristic way from stage to stage of social development, ‘though certainly not by a simple increase or decrease’”.

However, while these criteria are suggestive, they need more detailed exposition. ‘Contact between groups’, for instance, is fairly unclear, ‘chains of interdependence’ seem to relate more to the underlying causes of civility than civility itself, ‘tensions’ and power balances have had some bearing with regard to inequality, while ‘levels of control’ are a mechanism of civility. However, as Mennell points out, while presently over-broad and in need of refinement, they do indeed provide a starting-point.

ELIAS AND CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL THEORY

Elias has increasingly come to be regarded as one of the leading sociologists, having made innovative and important contributions to sociology of the twentieth century. To understand how Elias stands in relation to modern sociological theory, Dunning and Hughes (2013: 172- 200) suggest that his approach should be compared with other influential sociologists of the twentieth century who were familiar with Elias’ work. I shall now follow Dunning and Hughes in situating Elias in relation to the work of Anthony Giddens, Michel Foucault and Pierre Bourdieu.

Discussing complex sociological theories in a short space is challenging, so what follows draws out general points to make some comparisons possible.

Giddens's greatest contribution to social theory is his structuration theory, developed and refined in a series of books (Giddens, 1979; 1981; 1984; 1985). Structuration theory is an attempt to overcome the structure/agency dichotomy. 'Structuration' refers to the process by which individuals reproduce various systems through their activities. As agents draw on various rules and resources of structures, they either reproduce or amend the structural principles that organized their activities in the first place. Thus, structuration theory highlights both the continuity of structures while leaving space for social change.

The greatest difference between Elias and Giddens lies in their respective strengths and weaknesses. While Elias's strength lies in his ability to synthesise many different aspects of the social and biological sciences, Giddens's is in interpreting and critiquing the works of others. Much of the criticism against Elias was his failure to do this, because he often ignored or failed to take into account the works of others, and where he did so these were often more as caricatures than charitable 'fair plays' assessments. Yet in spite of this, the substantive interests and core assumptions of Elias and Giddens are remarkably similar. Elias and Giddens shared the goal of overcoming dichotomies in social theory, especially the individual/society dualism which has plagued sociology since its inception. In this pursuit, both attempted to develop a new sociological language that can more adequately express the inseparable connections between the individual and society (Tucker, 1998: 75). Elias sought to circumvent the dualism through his idea of figurations, and Giddens attempted to bring the two together in a unified approach, that of 'structuration' (Dunning and Hughes, 2013: 174- 176).

If the similar theoretical bases of the two approaches are set aside, the most glaring difference between them is it that, while Elias attempts to develop a set of thinking tools, a general framework for how to think about structure and agency, Giddens attempts to 'explain it all'. Giddens's complex language and level of abstraction stand in some contrast to Elias's clear and concise style, for which he was criticized as being 'too simple', and his grounded figurational approach. However, Elias was trying to build the groundwork for a new approach to sociology which he envisaged as empirically grounded, and with the emphasis on thinking tools. One of the principles of the more empirical sciences is that of maximum parsimony, the preference for a simpler theory over a more complex one. Elias's theoretical approach comes down to non-reducible core insights. As simpler theories are easier to falsify than more complex fuzzy ones, the increasing popularity and failure to rebut core elements of process sociology seems to me clear testament to its intellectual strength.

Elias's pursuit of a realist scientific sociology is an important difference with the work of Michel Foucault. As Smith (2001: 97) puts it, the difference between Elias and Foucault can be summarized as, while "Elias tried to swallow the world, Foucault tried to spit it out". In other words, while they both worked to understand the processes and mechanisms that created the social environments in which people found themselves, Foucault's ultimate objective was to subvert these processes and mechanisms while Elias wanted to develop a body of knowledge that could be used to avoid some of the worst outcomes resulting from the unplanned interweaving of individual actions and intentions.

Foucault is of course one of the most influential sources of ideas in the humanities and social sciences today, and he viewed history and philosophy as essential and mutually interconnected elements in his project. Introducing Foucault's work is no easy matter and O'Farrell (2005) has attempted to summarize his five key ideas or assumptions as follows. First, Foucault assumes that it is possible to produce and describe all human knowledge and culture, but this is always limited. Second, the best way to examine and deconstruct existing orders is through history as they exist and develop through time. Third, Foucault's maintained that truth is a historical category. Fourth, knowledge is always shaped by political, social and historical factors – by 'power' – in human societies. Fourth, it is as such essential to examine the relationship between knowledge and the factors that produce and constrain it. Finally, Foucault believed that social justice is an essential consideration that requires close and constant attention, examination, and action.

A striking similarity between Elias and Foucault is their shared concern to write against the view of the autonomous agent or 'we-less I' that has come to dominate Western thought. The basis of Elias's argument lies in his critique of what he termed 'homo clausus', the belief that the 'self' somehow exists inside of people and that there is a clear distinction between the self and the 'outside world' (Elias, 1978/2012; Dunning and Hughes, 2013: 48). For Elias, there is a more 'reality-congruent' way of viewing human beings (i.e. critical realist), and as has been discussed earlier, this can be seen as existing in figurations. Foucault, however, took a different approach, and rejected the idea that objective knowledge can be derived from the human sciences. Instead of attempting to build reality-congruent models, Foucault aimed instead to reconstruct the history of such constructions, thereby showing how the modern age is characterised by a new epistemological order that places individuals at centre-stage (Dunning and Hughes, 2013: 181-182).

Foucault was concerned with focusing on shifting power uses and the ways in which social power is expressed through what is accepted as 'truth'. Elias, on the other hand, proposes that, while power is integral to knowledge and behaviour, it is possible to build reality-congruent models (Elias, 1987/2007). Thus, a major difference is that Foucault did not believe it possible to gain a 'true' picture of the world, while Elias believed that, although conditions change over time and

this influences how we think, it is possible to ‘step outside’ of this through a type of detachment. In so doing, Elias thought that a more reality-congruent understanding could be gained and used to stop unplanned social processes that are likely to lead to violence and inequality.

Both Elias and Foucault were considerable historians who spent long periods of time in archives. For Foucault, concepts were not an end in themselves but, instead, tools with which to conduct practical explorations of the social world, past and present (Smith, 1999: 95). Nonetheless, Elias in *The Process of Civilization* and Foucault in *The History of Sexuality* were both concerned with the historical emergence of particular forms of subjectivity, perceptions of selfhood and the management of feelings, though they had different ideas about how these changes came about (Dunning and Hughes, 2013: 186). Elias is perhaps likely to have viewed Foucault as basing his approach too exclusively in the development of ideas without taking into sufficient account the material world in which they play out (Dunning and Hughes, 2013: 187).

Unlike Foucault, Pierre Bourdieu largely shared with Elias the pursuit of a ‘scientific’ sociology. Bourdieu defined habitus as ‘mental structures’ and as “both a system of schemes of production of practices and a system of perception and appreciation of practices” (1989: 19). Habitus thus relates to the tastes, preferences, perceptions and other properties of agents, and is both a mode of perception and an orientation through which agents comprehend and manage the social universe. As Dépelteau (2013) points out, Elias would most likely have agreed with this definition. For Bourdieu, society is composed of a myriad of fields including cultural, economic and political, and each of these fields is in turn composed of a hierarchy of positions occupied by various actors. These positions are defined by varying amounts of capital which actors draw on when they act. Thus, for Bourdieu, the relations between actors are not between actors, but between “positions occupied within the distributions of the resources which are or may become active, effective, like aces in a game of cards...” (Bourdieu, 1989: 17). Consequently Bourdieu’s explanations are usually not about relations between specific, empirical actors, as Elias’s is in *The Court Society* and *The Civilizing Process*.

It is striking how similar Bourdieu and Elias are in some important respects. Both believed that, in order to adequately grasp the social world, social research must be deeply relational and processual, and both accepted that it was necessary to develop a new bedrock to sociology that does not draw the conventional distinction between theory and research, but which instead theoretical models are fully interwoven with substantive investigations (Dunning and Hughes, 2013: 190). This bedrock for both involved revisiting the perennial dilemmas in sociology (as was the case with Giddens), and reformulating these questions in such a way they could be circumvented. In their respective reformulations, both developed perspectives which view society as composed of objective social structures which can be known, and perceived these structures as

produced, maintained and transformed through the people for whom they are most meaningful and who indeed compose the structure.

As a result, Elias and Bourdieu both steer a path between philosophical absolutism and relativism by arguing that social structures shape the structure of the material world and how people interact and relate to material things and each other, and see these relationships as governed by ideas and actions that are socially produced and reproduced. Interestingly, the circumvention of the dichotomies in sociology led both to rely on a similar triad of concepts, namely habitus, field (for Bourdieu) or figuration (for Elias), and power. Both Elias and Bourdieu believed that the concept of habitus – understood as the taken-for-granted ways of perceiving, thinking and acting – is crucial to understanding the social world because human conduct (responses and practices) tend to be orchestrated by these dispositions. Both Elias and Bourdieu investigated how specific configurations, conceptualized on both micro and the macro levels, serve as the sources of these ‘second natures’, and produced the dynamics of the contexts in which habitus (plural) function (Paulle, van Heerikhuizen and Emirbayer, 2012).

Despite the similarities, Elias has a more relational approach than Bourdieu and is consequently more concerned with the relationships between real people. While Elias studied how relations between interdependent actors produce social processes, Bourdieu’s approach viewed structural positions influencing actions via the habitus. Bourdieu’s approach is thus deterministic (structure → action) and co-deterministic (structure ↔ agency), whereas Elias is more relational (actor ↔ actor = social process) (Dépelteau, 2013: 279). A good example here is the difference between Bourdieu’s understanding of a ‘field’ and Elias’s understanding. For Bourdieu, a field is a metaphor taken from physics where people are viewed as atom like entities, whereas for Elias a field is more the way in which individual actors interests and intentions become intertwined, the field being the process of this intertwining. Thus, as Bourdieu believed the social world is structured first, and then actors start to move in predetermined ways, Bourdieu’s theory explains much more easily social reproduction than it does social change (Dépelteau, 2013: 280). While Bourdieu does acknowledge that agents can transform or reproduce structure, they are still predetermined by these so-called forces. Social change becomes a problem in a critical theory when actions are “largely determined”.

ELIAS, WEBER AND IDEAL TYPES

While Dunning and Hughes’s comparison of Elias with other contemporary social theorists is useful, their focus does not sufficiently recognise that Elias is in important respects more a classical and less a contemporary sociologist, and shares more similarities with one of the ‘founding fathers’ of sociology, Max Weber. A common claim made about Weber’s work is that

it is a running discussion with the ‘ghost of Karl Marx’. A similar claim might be made for Elias, that much of his work can be read as a running discussion with Weber, at places explicit and in others implicit (Dunning and Hughes, 2013; Goudsblom, 2004). As Weber attempted to link the Protestant ethic to the spirit of capitalism, so Elias attempted to link changing conduct and increasing self-regulation and control to broader long-term changes in the structure of society. Both were centrally concerned with changing mentalities or *habitus*, and both were concerned with a gradually increasing restraint on individuals; for Weber, this was in terms of the rationalization of capitalism, while for Elias it was in terms of manners (Weber, 1905/2001; Elias, 1939/2013; Goudsblom, 2004). Weber sketched the ideal typical features of the Calvinist Puritan as one who strongly believed in predestination, a doctrine characterised by ‘magnificent consistency’ as well as ‘extreme inhumanity’ (Goudsblom, 2004: 269). In addition, Weber emphasized that the ideal-typical personality of the capitalist entrepreneur included features such as ‘an unusually strong character’, ‘temperate self-control’, ‘clarity of vision’, and ‘strength to overcome innumerable obstacles’ (Weber, 1905/2001: 69).

In other words, Weber translated the logic of predestination into a theory of biography and personal motivation, whereby individuals are motivated to prove themselves worthy of being part of the elect by living a life of ‘systematic self-control’ (Goudsblom, 2004: 269). This has many synergies with the underlying argument of Elias’ ideas about the established and outsiders, and more broadly his ideas regarding the civilizing process (Elias, 1939/2013; Elias, 1965/2008). The civilizing process, or civil norms, and the rationalizing process, or legal-rational norms, are very similar, though Weber and Elias attribute different underlying mechanisms, namely religion and the structure of society, and they focus on different aspects of social life. However, in discussing Weber and Elias, Turner (2004: 246) has argued that the routinizing process in which legal-rational norms of conduct come to dominate interaction is a parallel to and has a similar analytical function to the civilizing process in which civil norms come to dominate social interaction.

However, there is an important distinction here between Weber on ‘ideal type’ and Elias on ‘real types’. Ideal types are constructs used for the systematic comparative analysis of historical data (Kvist, 2007: 474). Weber’s ideal types were often models of rational action, while in other cases they were patterns or processes traceable to simplified sets of causes (Ringer, 1997: 5). They permit selected elements within causal or behavioural sequences to be ascribed to specific causes, motives or beliefs. In this way, an ideal type allows research to focus on those aspects believed to be most relevant to the exploration and explanation of a phenomenon.

The ideal type is not intended to represent the ‘true reality’ but is rather a synthesis of a number of more or less present concrete phenomena or characteristics. And, importantly in terms of Elias’s rather different stance, it is explicitly a one-sided viewpoint, because certain features are emphasised based on the theoretical position of the researcher and what the researcher wants to

know (Segady, 2014: 358). Thus in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1905/2001), Weber famously emphasized certain features of the Protestant ethic which he thought directly influenced the development of capitalism, including dedication to work as a ‘calling’, the logic of predestination and the accumulation of capital for its own sake, while ignoring or back-grounding other features.

While Weber compared the rationalisations of other cultures in order to discern what features of Protestantism were likely to have been the driver of capitalistic development, Elias sought to uncover those features of civility and the processes driving them that were either similar or dissimilar between the respective countries. Elias rejects the ideal type methodology as historically problematic (Elias: 1983/2005), and develops and uses his own grounded and specific kind of approach, which is concerned with producing ‘real types’. The key example here is that Elias (1939/2013) compares the civilizing process between Germany, France and Britain so as to understand how ideas about civility changed, how people’s behaviour changed, and how these related to further changes in the structure of each society. Elias uses the concept of civility by deeply grounding this in specific historical detail, including the kind of awkward departures that Weber ignores. I shall return to Elias’ methodological thinking, including the ‘real type’, in Chapter 2.

CONCLUSION

This thesis is concerned with social change in South Africa, in a context where an established minority came to dominate politically, economically and socially. A major catalyst for the processes that led to this distribution of power ratios between the different social groups was the discovery of diamonds and then gold. However, there is no obvious direct, causal link between these discoveries and configurations of power. Why did South African society change in the way it did? What were the mechanisms at work?

The discovery of diamonds and gold did not in itself necessitate or cause particular changes, but this did create the circumstances in which mechanisms of power became established through which changes could occur. Important here was the rise and formation of a new elite, the Randlords. But this introduces numerous questions. How exactly did this grouping form, by what means did its members influence processes of social change, why did they do so, and were they a homogenous group with shared values or in competition? The classical means of addressing these questions is elite theory. However, beyond pointing out that there is an elite which has specific interests and may or may not be cohesive, this does not offer a particularly useful framework that can be used to understand the sociological basis of social change. Relatedly, the methods deployed in this usually revolve around social network analysis which, as already

mentioned, is unable to satisfactorily deal the processual and long term historical nature of social life and its figurational basis.

The theoretical approach which is best able to take these factors into account, I conclude, is the work of Norbert Elias. While it is not a completely systematised framework, it does offer a central theory that is useful in linking micro becomings to macro social changes and is eminently suited to explaining the processes which link the two. More specifically, what makes Elias's approach so suitable to researching social change are the following points.

First, Elias argues that sociology should avoid thinking either about single individuals or about society as static givens. The object of investigation for sociologists should be interdependent groups of individuals and the long-term transformations of the figurations they form. Second, Elias offers a means to conceptualise the nature of individual character or psychology as emerging out of membership within particular figurations. Understanding the basis of an individual's 'greatness' as well as their activities and way of seeing the world requires an analysis of the figurations in which they are associated. Third, Elias argues that 'human nature' has a history, and transformations in structural features also involves a transformation in people's second natures, and vice versa. Understanding an elite, 'racial' group or the like should involve the analysis of historically located groups of 'interdependent selves'. Fourth, Elias's approach is deeply relational. His handling of the dynamics and processes of power, central to this thesis, highlighted that power takes many different forms and is a characteristic of all human relationships. Individuals depend on others for their power, it is not held essentially by anyone, and yet, as they depend on others for their power so do the 'others' depend on them. And fifth, Elias provides a framework (civilizing and de-civilizing processes) on which the direction and forms of change can be framed within long-term developments. Relatedly, his approach avoids seeing these changes in either evolutionary terms or as directionless, but rather finds the middle ground. The strengths of an Eliasian framework are the strengths needed in my research, for the scope, methods, and major themes of his work are suited to modelling and solving the particular analytical problems of concern.

Elias's work in my view is not generally met by 'fair play' and the value of his work has often been downplayed. However, Elias's more relational and processual approach as well as its greater ability to explain social change makes it far more suitable than, for example, the work of Bourdieu, Foucault, Giddens or indeed Weber to take forward the substantive and theoretical interests of this project. The question of how to operationalise his ideas in a grounded exploration and theorisation of social change in South Africa is now discussed in Chapter 2.

CHAPTER 2: WORKING IT OUT: CONSTRUCTING AN ELIASIAN METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION: WHAT TO DO

Prior to my first experience of archival research, which was in the African manuscripts section of the Bodleian Library in Oxford, I wasn't really sure what to do. I assumed the documents located there would be organized in a familiar and understandable way, much like a library, and so all I had to do was read them then write about them. I didn't think that I needed to pre-prepare on 'what archive research is', that if I approached an archive and its particular contents in a systematic and logical way as I would library research, then hard work would trump all. However, the reality of doing archival work was quite different from what I expected.

I had not realized how different archival research was from the library work I was used to. For almost a year prior to entering the archival field, I had been reading the secondary literature, from the broad macro-narratives of South African history, to more specific texts on Johannesburg and Kimberley, to writings on mining companies, to the Randlords as well as some material on George Farrar as a beginning example of a Randlord. I thought that with this background, the collections would be straightforward to understand. Yet, what I soon realised is that much of what collections contain is the ordinary, day-to-day, small and seemingly unimportant. There is surprisingly little about larger events or what would be considered 'significant'. When people write to one another, such things form only one part of their daily lives. The newly planted pear trees or the fit of new leather boots often gain as much attention as those events a researcher would think significant. What is perhaps surprising is that I did not consider this, as if I forgot I was dealing with real people whose micro worlds were as important to them as 'big' events.

Prior to entering the archive (aka the manuscripts reading room), I read the Bodleian catalogue and the Rhodes inventories online, but this felt a bit unnecessary. Why should I scour these when I would be going through the collections in the archive anyway? The summaries these provided also appeared to be fairly arbitrary, so I thought I should see the documents and come to my own conclusions. And, even if I found inventory items that seemed relevant, I would still need to go through the boxes to find them. This, of course, was a poor judgement, and largely had to do with my lack of experience with catalogues, inventories and collections. I did not yet understand the nature of the documents itemised and that, in fact, the contents were largely day-to-day. It was only after being 'lost in the archive' that I came to understand the value of finding aids, and only then did I appreciate that their value is dependent on the skills of the researcher and hard, lateral thinking.

I did pre-prepare a list of potentially useful collections/archives connected with the ‘diamonds and gold’ focus of my work, but my choice to study ‘big’ men, the Randlords, made this quite difficult. The problem is that, the more in/famous someone was, the more that the various kinds of writing they produced and received are likely to be kept, the more likely these are to have been acted on, the more there is written about them in other archival locations as well as secondary sources, and the more intertwined they were with organizations, people and events. There is quite simply too much to handle in its entirety. In addition, while there may be a major literature of secondary sources which an analysis could focus on (thereby avoiding having to tackle the voluminous collections), these often contain, as discussed later regarding Mennell’s work on the ‘American civilizing process’, intrusive interpretations. My research is concerned with understanding Randlords from a particular, Eliasian, perspective, and so basing my interpretation on secondary interpretations would not be in the main appropriate.

Once in an archive, there is nothing that indicates what should be done, only a half dozen usually older researchers deeply involved in whatever they are reading or doing. My supervisor had set up some learning exercises, but these seemed enigmatic to me. One aspect was to look at the inventories of collections. There were at least fifty of these in the Bodleian reading room, and there seemed no logic or relationship between them. They were titled by names, places, companies or even time periods; some were very small, others massive. If a question in mind does not appear to fit one of these, then how to know where to look? I was also directed to the inventories of the voluminous Rhodes Papers. After grabbing an inventory that seemed relevant, however, I realized that even the inventories contain what seemed a jumble of items with an order I was unable to understand. And when I looked at the inventory of the Farrar Papers, it still seemed irrelevant. Photographs of Lake Victoria? Letters to a daughter discussing her school marks? My reaction was, this is not history; history is grand narratives, meaningful events, significance; this is just random stuff from the past! There were other training tasks but I was equally unable to relate to what these asked me to do, including reading papers in one of the Rhodes collection boxes. I had imagined that ‘history’ would be there, something grander, and identifiable. I did not realise that the comprehension and compiling of ‘history’ was so indirect. After paging through catalogues and indexes, anxiety and panic set in.

Then I began requesting boxes from a collection that almost by default became my ‘target’, concerning George Farrar. Everything in this was his. It also seemed manageable because there are ‘only’ 22 boxes. The exercise set up asked me to read and not record, but this went out the door. Opening the first boxes, I realised that there were also hundreds of newspaper clippings. What if anything should I do with these? Regarding contents generally, how much should I record? And how to determine importance? My character pushes me to be thorough, so I begin typing rather than how I was counselled, reading. But what should I record? I skipped items that

seemed pointless, but even with this seemingly small collection, I thought I would never finish. This was exacerbated by Farrar's handwriting, which seemed unintelligible. Most of the boxes contained letters, and these often assumed knowledge or were in response to something else, so even when I did work out what they said, they remained elliptical because I did not know the context of what Farrar was writing about.

I was aware that the literature emphasizes that the 'geography' of a collection, and the forces that have played a role in shaping it, must be understood. While this is theoretically true and useful, it is far more difficult in practice. All that I could find out about the Farrar collection was that the papers were donated by three of Farrar's descendants and that was all. I did not know nor did there seem to be any way of finding out the processes through which they went before they arrived in the Bodleian, often referred to as provenance, and what role any archive personnel might have played in shaping the collections, if any.

The collection is separated into two broad manuscript collections (Mss. Afr.s.1737 and Mss. Afr.s. 2175) that now constitute the 'Farrar collection', and these are items directly relevant to him (the primary sedimentation). There are also occasional letters to Farrar in other collections, but these are few and far between. The first collection is composed of one box containing a seven chapter memoir relating to the life of Farrar, written by his daughter Muriel. Mss. Afr. S. 2175, on the other hand, contains 21 boxes, roughly organized into a number of broad themes. Boxes 1-4 contain family mining activities; box 5, Farrar's arrest after the Jameson Raid and a few items relating to the South Africa War; Box 9, Farrar's political career; boxes 10-11, family social activities and so on. What struck me after going quickly through all the boxes is how patchy the contents were. Perhaps there is 'something' on major events in all this, I surmised, but it is truly partial. But then, there was no intention on the part of Farrar to record this. This also helped me to understand why the secondary literature seemed so lumpy and partial, which is that it has to work with the data that exists.

I did try my hand at analysing documents at this stage, trying to get a grip on the 'who, what, where, when and why', but I had trouble understanding how individual documents were relevant or how they might be connected to some broader narrative I could construct. There are no start or endpoints, and the documents are flows of meaning that have to be caught in process. I did not realise how paramount my own historical/sociological knowledge and imagination would be in making these into a logical narrative of some sort, because on their own these documents seemed largely meaningless.

So, plan B. I decided to photograph everything, although again I was counselled not to, in desperation. This was 22 boxes, and I photographed every scrap in every box. I worked out a system of photographing documents, labelling them and putting them into folders so I knew

exactly where they came from, and this worked well. But this was postponing grappling with an underlying problem and attempting to solve it by brute force; my labour would pay off somehow.

I worked a month of 9-5 days in photographing, and when I got home, I slept for 36 hours straight off. This exhaustion at least in part came from the gap between what I expected and what actually happened. Reading some of what I was going to base my research on made it feel minute, irrelevant, ordinary and daily. I had not realised quite how much of historical work lies in the researcher's mind and the degree of interpretation and imagination required. That is, part of a 'world' has to be explored by using an ocean of scraps, such as sentences in a diary or letter. Succinctly, I did not appreciate how big the gap is between 'History' and the sources until I experienced this myself, although I had read about it. In particular, I did not realise that the past is not 'there', ready-made, and instead had thought there would be something guiding me to 'significant' documents and which could take the blame or responsibility for any errors I made in interpreting these.

When I left the Bodleian and the Farrar collection, I had made precisely 1,713 jpegs and had 77 pages of notes and extracts, the latter not particularly well organized. What made these activities seem especially burdensome was that I had not recorded exactly what I had done and why. Later I realised that I had not taken into account how important many of the decisions I was making were for what I found and would eventually write about. Also, post-archive, I should have reflected and written more on the experience, and I should have begun looking at my data instantly while the process was still fresh in my mind. However, this experience did make clear that I had not equipped myself properly, and that additional work needed to be done prior to any further archival research. The year following this was spent developing my thinking, understanding and knowledge base of archival research, as well as a deeper engagement with the Eliasian literature. With these two dimensions, and as the following discussion will explore, I developed an Eliasian methodology suitable to answering the questions I have in mind. As I hope this chapter will show, I have come a long way.

ELIAS ON METHODOLOGY, HISTORY AND SOCIOLOGY

Like many 'classical sociologists', Elias did not explicitly write about research methods, but in his case conducted research which provides practical examples of good practice as he saw it. Elias believed sociology should be an open-ended project (Baur and Ernst, 2011: 117), and methodologically he thought that methods should not be finalised prior to undertaking research because these matters should be "substantive, 'live' concerns germane to the particular problems and topics under investigation" (Dunning and Hughes, 2013: 151). However, this brings with it some problems, for without an explicit statement of how to conduct an Eliasian study, researchers

must rely on how Elias conducted his own studies and extrapolate from these to formulate a ‘how to’ for their own projects. This introduces a large degree of latitude. For example, Mennell’s (2007) study of *The American Civilizing Process*, discussed later, is Eliasian by name and intention but actually relies on secondary and tertiary sources. In addition, my searches suggested that there have been no earlier Eliasian studies (but see comments later concerning the ‘Whites Writing Whiteness’ Project) that have focused on concrete mechanisms and figurations, with the focus instead on broad civilizing processes. This indicates a shortcoming in the Eliasian literature, both in terms of methodological guidance, and the failure to concretely describe and explain processes by looking at figurational dynamics. It is however crucial that figurations are described in action, for it is this which causally or otherwise links individuals and figurations to real social processes and events. Indeed, this is precisely what Elias argued in his most detailed statement of the methodological aspects of inquiry, which I now go on to discuss.

Elias’s introduction to *The Court Society* (1983/2005), entitled ‘Sociology and History’, is concerned with their relationship and specifically how sociology differs methodologically from history. *The Court Society* originated in Elias’s Habilitation thesis and was supervised by Karl Mannheim. It was completed in 1933 in Germany, but because of rising Nazism, the text not published until the 1960s when he chanced upon it in an old briefcase and decided to rework it (Elias, 1983/2005: xii). The introductory essay was written specifically for the reworked version; and with a number of further additions, *The Court Society* has the curious status of being both a precursor and an addition to *The Civilizing Process*.

In *The Court Society*, Elias examines specific, concrete phenomena, in particular long term developments in the princely court of the ancient regime, as a step between feudal and industrial society. This allowed Elias to examine how it came to exist, and what it subsequently transformed into, that is, a sociogenetic approach. The development of such things as court society, feudal society and so on can then be compared within a single society or between societies in order to better understand how and why they change. And for Elias this is a key way that sociology and history differ: sociology develops frameworks to investigate social change, while history is more concerned with particularities as its centre of interest.

Elias characterises history as a discipline as being concerned with the ‘unique and unrepeated’ and focusing on an accumulation of actions by individual people. He sees this as unsatisfactory from a sociological perspective, because connections between particular events can be ignored or left to speculation based on what is the dominant disciplinary viewpoint at any one point in time. As a result, history – or rather, historiography, the writing of history – is continuously being rewritten in different time-periods. The problem with this for Elias is the lack of systematic or verifiable frameworks which can explain the connections between particular phenomena or events. For him, such frameworks should be concerned with long term, recurring structures and

processes, which can explain the social functions of social positions. For example, in order to understand the behaviour of an individual in power, it is necessary to develop a model of the specific social structures which support patterns of superordinancy and interdependency, in both a specific structure (e.g. court society) and the broader society. Without this, from a sociological perspective it is not possible to understand the logic of social behaviour and how hierarchies are maintained (Elias, 19683/2005: 5-6).

The word 'history' appears to be unproblematic, as simply the study of the past. Yet as Elias comments, history is composed of both what is written about, the past, and also the process of writing history, historiography. And as the past is irretrievably gone, it is not possible to know in an absolute sense whether what is being written about it is true or false, but it *is* possible to evaluate writing, argument and interpretation about this. This is done by referring back to the original sources, the documents on which historical claims are based. The object and substance of history, how we come to know the past, is through interrogation of the remaining original evidence, and history is the remaining evidence, usually documentary, as the only reliable basis for this, in teasing out the connections between events on the basis of these remnants. In history, Elias comments, the basis of these interpretations is usually taken for granted, differs from generation to generation, and changes according to the intellectual factions with which researchers align themselves.

Consequently, while references to sources are verifiable, the selection and interpretation of the documentary fragments are left largely to the discretion of the individual researcher (Elias, 1969b/2006b: 7-8). For Elias, history consequently has the strength of careful documentation on which verifiable/falsifiable knowledge-claims can be based, but a weakness because subject to the vagaries of particular researchers and their time-bound ideas and values. For a sociologist, what is required are firm frameworks to guide research, covering the questions posed, the selection of data and the connecting of events. These should in turn develop with the growth of knowledge within a field and remain autonomous from any particular piece of research or individual researcher (Elias, 1983/2005: 7-8). He also argues that documents should be used in a more distanced way within a figurational analysis. This involves understanding that, for example, a letter was written within a certain social context, a specific point in history, and therefore an understanding of the social dynamics surrounding its writing, reading and possible effects is needed.

Elias (1983/2005: 9) sees a development in historical thinking requiring building testable frameworks, which research can then either further develop or refute, and the most seemingly mundane topics, from court society to the ground-plans of palaces, can provide verifiable insights into the relationships between people in unfolding social life. His preference is for the development of 'real types'. However, given the focus on the present in sociology, such things

do not correspond with disciplinary views of what is valuable. He suggests this is largely due to the erroneous belief that past social formations have nothing in common with contemporary ones, resulting in a very superficial way of thinking about changes over time. Yet, from an Eliasian perspective, the core task of sociology is to understand the ways in which people are interconnected, and so all figurations formed by human beings and the study of all periods of history are relevant. Relatedly, variability in the ways people are connected to one another is so great that the study of any social grouping brings new understanding, and this will remain the case as long as there are no overarching sociological frameworks that can unify consecutive studies (Elias, 1983/2005: 9-12).

Elias's approach to working with and through frameworks starts with the figuration. While each individual who makes up a figuration is unique and unrepeatable, the figurations that people compose can remain relatively unchanged over time. Because developments within them occur slowly when viewed from the perspective of each individual, figurations can appear as static social systems (Elias, 1983/2005: 16-17). In discussing this, and as commented in the previous chapter, Elias characterises Weber's ideal types, such as of bureaucracy, the city, and capitalist society, as frameworks that impose intellectual order on social phenomena that appear disordered. For Elias, Weber's approach was extensive, not intensive. His ideal types do not refer to the actual interrelations between the composing people, but are intellectual constructs for thinking in a comparative way and which are imposed on cases derived from the thinking of the sociologist. They are therefore akin to the historical way of working. Elias draws his distance from this. The aim, for Elias, is not to construct artificial structures and impose them on the people/events observed: Weber's ideal types tidy up the complicated messiness of social life, while the aim instead should be to develop 'real types'.

Elias argues that it is better to be intensive, to focus on real events and people so that the model and actuality come together. In other words, sociology should conduct detailed studies and observe figurations in action in order to develop concrete pictures of how they actually work. Taking one example, Elias indicates that because Weber tried to assimilate such an extraordinary volume of data, his model of patrimonialism is too loosely constructed. As a result, the intensive examination of a social phenomenon offers many advantages. In such a study, with Elias in *The Court Society* using the example of a monarch in a court society, it is possible to establish in detail what distribution of power and what specific routines enable them to maintain themselves in the always risky position of a powerful autocrat. His detailed examples show how this mechanism of competing power groups functions in practice.

For Elias, history typically focuses on people in powerful social positions – emperors, tycoons, politicians, princes and the like – with the logic being that, due to these positions, their scope for action is larger than that of others. The sociological problematic of how such elites form, the basis

of their power, and also their decline, is usually neglected, as are the social structures which give individuals the opportunity for influence or not. The sociological concern, then, is not the individual people *per se*, but particular people and groups as the means of penetrating through the unique to more figural dynamics. What is needed, according to Elias (1983/2005: 19-20), is:

... Research within which the connections between the actions and achievements of the individual actors of history and the structure of the societies within which they attain significance are systematically investigated. If this were done, it would not be difficult to show how often the selection of the individuals on whose fate or actions the attention of historians is focused is bound up with their membership of specific minorities, of rising, ruling or declining elite groups in particular societies.

Elias's position here, then, is that an individual's opportunity for power or influence depends on their relationship to relevant elite groups; and as a result, without an analysis of the workings of elites and hierarchies, it is not possible to systematically investigate actions and achievements of historical figures. The relationship between figurations and individuals is therefore crucial and it is the task of sociology to bring the figuration into the foreground.

It was with these ideas in mind that Elias conducted his study of Louis XIV, exploring both how the structure of an elite can give or deny opportunities for achievement, and how the particular social position affects the development of someone's individuality and attitudes (Elias, 1983/2005: 20). Elias (1983/2005: 22) argues that systematically examining the nature of the position an individual holds within a particular figuration is needed for the relationship between them and the social position they occupy to be properly understood. There is no sense of an individual in an individualistic sense for Elias here, however, because the social positions and the changes through which people pass during their lives are not unique. While a social position may change over time, the speed at which it changes is slower than its individual occupants and is in a broad sense repeatable. And for Elias it is precisely this which history, to varying degrees, fails to take into account. What is sociologically required, he proposes, is penetrating through the layer of the unique and individual events to reach a broader view that includes the social positions and figurations of people. It is only through this that it is possible to sociologically understand the relationship between a position determined by a particular figuration, and the person and conduct of the individual who happens to hold it at a particular time (Elias, 1983/2005: 25-26).

Figurations form the backdrop to historical studies, and at the forefront are the individuals. However, the task of sociology is, for Elias, to bring the backdrop into the foreground, "to make it accessible to systematic research as a structured web of individuals and their actions" (Elias, 1983/2005: 29), and doing so without removing the importance of the character and value of individuals. By focusing on figurations, individuals are viewed as mutually related, linked in chains of interdependency. Even in the case of the powerful, it is not possible to understand how

they attained such a position and how this changed over time if the structure of these positions and the figurations into which they are interwoven are not brought to the foreground.

Elias broadly thought that sociology should use methods that are capable of coming to grips with the relational, processual and dynamic nature of social life. He also paints a more concrete picture of what this methodology should look like, arguing that, in order to understand the present in terms of its characteristic social formations, sociology should be concerned with the long term historical developments that shaped the present. Change over time is composed of both the unique and unrepeatable, and formations with greater regularity. Sociology should be concerned with the latter, he proposes, as it is through the latter that models and frameworks can be built which can be compared within a social formation over time, or between different social formations. These are reality-congruent figural models and in Elias's terms 'real types'.

One such figural 'real type' is court society, and through this Elias shows how in concrete practice sociologists should approach the topic. An analysis of social positions allows sociologists to come to grips with the basis of power, the means through which people are able to influence events. This in turn involves an understanding of the function these social positions have in specific social formations, which in turn shows something about the structure of society. The degree to which power is concentrated in specific localities and in specific forms is what creates opportunities for particular individuals and groups while constraining others. Yet there are also constraints involved in power, so it is also the task of sociology to understand the figural context in terms of both the structural conditions and the psychosocial conditions. People are formed within groups, and understanding groups can tell much about individuals.

THE AMERICAN CIVILIZING PROCESS: AN ELIASIAN EXEMPLAR?

Elias's ideas add up to a way of doing sociology and conceptualising society which aims to explain why and how societies change, provide descriptions of mechanisms of change, and conceptually frame these changes. Elias conducted all his research on Europe, and finding examples where his key ideas are put to work in examining change in a non-European context has been difficult. Such studies would clearly be useful in thinking about the ways in which my own work could or should use an Eliasian framework to investigate change in South Africa. However, the only fully articulated study found is Stephen Mennell's (2007) *The American Civilizing Process*, which provides a helpful starting-point on how to use an Eliasian approach outside of Europe.

Mennell uses Elias's idea of the civilizing processes as the core to better understand the course of American social development since the beginnings of European settlement, exploring whether underlying processes similar to those traced by Elias in European history can also be seen at work in the USA. His broad argument is that, while the US civilizing process was initially an imported

version of that of eighteenth century Britain, it soon started diverging. While both Americans and Europeans have become increasingly subjected to external and internal restraints, the nature and origins of these constraints are not always similar. The differences involved can be seen regarding the American habitus, including in relation to violence, a belief in progress tied to a preference for a minimal government, and the 'American Dream'.

Mennell begins with an overview of Elias's main theoretical concepts, followed by an exposition of quintessentially American characteristics. The writings of the 'founding fathers', especially Jefferson, are drawn on to make these points, showing how ideas about progress were associated with a preference for minimal government and a greater emphasis on individualism than in Europe. Mennell also follows Elias in using historical sources to trace changes in American manners, showing very similar changes occurring to those found by Elias in Europe. Following this, he discusses a plethora of different issues, including how the US civilizing process was driven more from lengthening chains of interdependence, differences in crime and justice between the US and Europe, and that the US and Europe show similar trends in violence and thus a similar civilizing process. After this, Mennell explores the development of the US state as a dominant power, and how the way in which the US expanded left a 'frontier mentality' as a remaining important part of the American habitus. He also considers how America deals with the absorption of immigrant groups or 'integration struggles', followed by the distinctive monopoly of force in the US, the notion of the 'American Dream', and religiosity, finally concluding by arguing that there is in fact a clear and distinctive civilizing trajectory in the US.

Clearly, *The American Civilizing Process* is a broad-brush interpretation of US society and its development, making it difficult to discuss and engage with in specifically Eliasian terms. Mares (2010), for instance, argues that Mennell does a good job of explaining at a general level some interesting aspects of the American civilizing process, but that he has largely overlooked the problems of 'race' and social exclusion, which could have been handled in the Eliasian framework by taking an established-outsider perspective. For Collins (2009), it is Mennell's reference to characteristics of the American habitus or national character which is at issue, for not only is the idea of a 'national character' itself problematic, but also it is questionable how these characteristics evidence varying levels of change/advance in the civilizing process. More swingingly, Collins (2009) also comments that 'manners and morals' books have become increasingly weak indicators of actual manners, and the framework of civilizing/decivilizing processes actually is not applicable to the modern United States, as more a theory of the early modern period. Overall, Collins argues that much of the weakness in Mennell's account has to do with Eliasian theory, arguing that Elias is strongest when he is most Weberian, and weakest when using 'historicized Freudian theory' (Collins, 2009: 441), and that Mennell is too concerned with proving Elias right.

While Mennell does conduct an Eliasian study of the American civilizing process, in my reading there is a palpable disconnection between theory and method/ology. In terms of method, for instance, he bases his arguments almost exclusively on secondary or even tertiary sources. For example, data on Jefferson were drawn from Bergh's (1907) *The Writing of Thomas Jefferson* and *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson* by Boyd (1950), and many of the linchpins that hold Mennell's arguments together are based on the interpretations of data by other researchers. The problem is that an Eliasian approach relies, first on careful documentation of data, and second on the connection of data and events within the Eliasian framework; so my conclusion is that Mennell's approach fails, although interestingly, on both accounts. His study is theoretically well developed, and substantively insightful, but in important respects fails in its methodological aspects. As it stands, *The American Civilizing Process* (2007) is a broad overview of a changing society, with some Eliasian concepts guiding and framing the discussion. However, the substance of the book contains perhaps surprisingly little of what Elias intended with his process model; that is, the relationships between groups (established/outsider dynamics), the unintended and unplanned nature of social change, the dynamics within groups and so on, are not fully developed. In other words, the core of an Eliasian approach, namely a radical emphasis on the relational and processual, is not entirely absent, but is under-elaborated.

Nonetheless, there are a number of points which can be drawn from Mennell's work. First, it is crucial that primary data is used, as secondary data has already been interpreted in some way, which makes it difficult to apply an Eliasian perspective. Second, a more systematic application of the breadth of the Eliasian framework is important, as well as careful thought given to dimensions likely to be important to explanations. Third, analyses are likely to gain in meaning and accuracy if conducted on, and are reality-congruent at, a more micro level. Some of the thinking behind these comments is drawn from the Whites Writing Whiteness (<http://www.whiteswritingwhiteness.ed.ac.uk/>) project, to which my own research is connected, and which aims to do precisely this, to explore how white South Africans perceived themselves and others and how this changed over time between the 1770s and the 1970s. Using letters as the basis through which these changes can be traced, WWW aims to shed light on why and how whites came to dominate a large black majority, that is, broad sociogenetic changes, and how these in turn were in a dialectical way linked to changes regarding how whites perceived themselves and 'whiteness' more generally. The focus on the link between psychosocial and structural changes indicates that it is at its core Eliasian.

ARCHIVAL RESEARCH AND ARCHIVIZATION

A change occurred in the nineteenth century when historians began to equate professional historical knowledge with scholarship based on archival research (Eskildsen, 2008). This was

linked to a broader empirical turn, including the belief in an objective and material world where certain and reliable forms of knowledge could be gained through direct and indirect observation. The task of the historian in this was seen as finding the traces of the past that could be thereby recovered. By founding the validity of knowledge claims on collecting the remains of the past, historians could argue for professional authority (Huistra, 2013: 63; Eskildsen, 2013: 10; Elias, 1983/2005). In this, ‘factual’ remnants of the past in the form of archival documentary material were viewed as superior to autobiographies, newspaper articles, philosophical reconstructions, because these were seen to circumvent reliance on the observations and interpretations of others. The attraction of archival research for many in the social sciences and humanities (including my own original attraction) is precisely the belief that the past is inscribed – however imperfectly – on archival documents, and through research the past can be recovered or recreated in some way – what Philip Abrams (1982: 330) criticised as ‘resurrectionalism’. This belief that the archive is a place where an empirical method can be straight-forwardly applied has in recent years led to critical attention being given to archival research and what has been termed as an ‘archivization’ impulse (Derrida, 1995/2005).

However, this at basis positivistic approach to archives was challenged by a second broad turn in thinking about research methodology, namely social constructionism or interpretivism, for many epitomised by Berger and Luckmann’s (1966) *The Social Construction of Reality*. ‘Reality’ in a social constructionist framework is defined as that which is seen to have an existence independent of people’s volition, while ‘knowledge’ refers to the certainty that phenomena are real around the characteristics we believe them to have (Berger and Luckmann, 1966: 13). Thus what is real and what is not is likely to be different for an eighteenth century missionary as opposed to a twenty-first century computer programmer, the difference being the specific forms of knowledge that they hold, as well as a perspective or world-view and knowledge associated with the particular social and historical contexts each lives in. As reality exists as both objective and subjective reality, any adequate understanding of it must comprehend both of these aspects, as well as the processes by which knowledge is constructed, doing so in such a way that a taken-for-granted ‘reality’ can be understood as well as the consequences this ‘reality’ has (Berger and Luckmann, 1966). The W.I. Thomas theorem best describes this mechanism by stating that “if men [sic] define situations as real, they are real in their consequences” (Thomas and Thomas, 1928: 572).

However, despite there now being broad consensus about the socially constructed character of social life, there is a diversity of views concerning where (if anywhere) objective reality ends and social constructions begin. During the 1970s and 1980s, social constructionist approaches also underwent a transformation as sociologists engaged with the work of Michel Foucault and others countering the master narratives of positivist modes of inquiry in a more root and branch way (Riessman, 2005). This broad narrative turn brought under the spotlight the way in which

subjectivities are assembled and are imposed on facts taken to be objective, with a particular interest in textual representation within this. Foucault's (1975) *I, Pierre Reviere, having slaughtered my mother, my sister, and my brother...* can be seen as an exemplar here. What this brings to analytical attention is that documentary sources are not objective; while they exist prior to and thus independent of a researcher, they are very much the constructions or productions of specific individuals or groups or organizations and are fundamentally marked by the grounded, partial, viewpoints and interpretations of those who produced and circulated them.

Social constructionism underlies and is in part the source of postmodernist thinking, with many postmodern ideas expressed in moderate form providing a useful correction to problematic modernist thinking (e.g. belief in indefinite and continuous progress, scientism, cultural Eurocentrism, etc.). Relatedly, postmodernist thought has showed how the nature of social scientific knowledge is not neutral, objective or impartial, but instead "everything is shaped, presented represented, re-presented, symbolized, signified, signed, constructed by the speaker, photographer, writer for a set purpose" (Cook, 2001: 7). Associated with this theoretical turn has been the development of watchwords encapsulating its way of thinking, such as process rather than product, becoming rather than being, dynamic rather than static, context rather than text, and recognising time and place and circumstance rather than valorising absolutes (Cook, 2001: 7). These are all familiar from Elias's work. These ideas and the broader constructionist and narrative turn they are associated with have impacted on historical as well as social science scholarship and have had particular resonance regarding archival research. Antoinette Burton (2005: 7-8), for example, comments helpfully that history is not simply the act of re-creating the past or finding facts about it, but is also a:

... set of complex processes of selection, interpretation, and even creative invention – processes set in motion by, among other things, one's personal encounter with the archive, the history of the archive itself, and the pressure of the contemporary moment on one's reading of what is to be found there.

Not only is the process of constructing narratives of the past a complicated interpretational matter, but the very appeal of archives which has swept much contemporary thinking – particularly by reference to Jacques Derrida (1995/2005) on archive fever – is so disconnected from the reality of archival research that Carolyn Steedman (2001: ix) has ironically termed this the modern 'romance of dust':

... the immutable, obdurate set of beliefs about the material world, past and present, inherited from the nineteenth century, with which modern history-writing attempts to grapple; Dust is also the narrative principle of that writing; and Dust is the joke.

Steedman is here writing in response to nineteenth century perceptions of the archive and also to Derridian-induced fever, and the juxtaposition is telling. A central concern of these 'new' discussions is the limitations of textual and documentary sources to convey or reflect a past

historical reality. As understanding the past is overwhelmingly based on textual sources, such understanding is inevitably limited and shaped by the vagaries of the textual remains, and, as such, the investigation of the past is as much an investigation of the present traces of the past as of the past itself (Prescott, 2008: 34). Work with archival materials tends to assume that there is a relationship – in some sense causal – between a document and an event or moment in history, and this forms the basis of assertions about the value and use of historical records (Meehan, 2009: 159). However, this link does not exist, or at least not in the literal sense. A link needs to be made between documents and events, but this is (nearly always) one that the researcher constructs on the basis of their understanding.

In addition, texts do not exist in a vacuum. Texts are laden with memories, experiences and also references to other texts, both for their creators and for later readers, something often referred to as ‘intertextuality’ (Kristeva, 1966). This chapter, for example, is composed of both my own words (though these too are populated implicitly by pieces of other texts, or ‘constitutive intertextuality’), and the words of others which I reference and quote from (or ‘manifest intertextuality’) and is thereby composed of degrees of ‘otherness’ and ‘own-ness’ (Fairclough, 1992: 102). Intertextuality thus refers to the way in which texts exist ‘between’ other texts; and by understanding these reference points, the researcher is able to better grasp what the writer’s or speaker’s underlying meanings are and the ‘work’ the text is doing.

It is also important to recognise the ability of the extant – and partial – texts to shape and direct interpretations of the past, for researchers necessarily base their understandings and interpretations on whatever sources exist. There are many different processes by which one text may remain in existence and become accessible to researchers, and not another, and this is often not happenstance but the product of the kind of ‘established and outsider’ dynamics that Elias points to, and thus mechanisms of power which shape ‘the past’ through the purposeful shaping of remaining sources (Prescott, 2008: 49).

Foucault and Derrida both make this point, though from a very abstract point of view, with ‘the archive’ coming to be seen as a storage device used to wield power and control (Hill, 1993; Craven, 2008: 14). In *Imperial Power*, for example, Richards (1993) defines the ‘imperial archive’ as “a fantasy of knowledge collected and united in the service of state and Empire”. While it is true that the contents of archives do determine what can and cannot be said about the past and thus exercise a degree of ‘discursive power’, the actual process of accumulation and assimilation is usually more subtle and has varying degrees of influence depending on the social and political context of the particular archive. In other words, coming to grips with the process of ‘archivization’ requires knowledge of the specific history of particular documents/collections and the specific archives in which and with which a scholar works.

A first step here involves distinguishing an archive and the archival materials which it contains. A conservative view of an archive is as an institution or purpose-built site (local records office, government department or university library collection) that keeps historical records (Schwartz and Cook, 2002: 2), and are storehouses of rare, often unique materials created over time by individuals, organizations, and social movements. These may include letters, diaries, confidential memos, lecture notes, transcripts, rough drafts, unpublished manuscripts, and other personal and organizational records (Hill, 1993: 2). Yet the concept of the archive has a radical incarnation too, as it also often refers to anything that is old or established, from old movies to physical objects (Hirtle, 2000), and also to any accumulation of organised thought.

Archives were defined by nineteenth century archivists, not as the depository in which they were held, but by specific features of documents; documents such as deeds, treaties, laws and regulations were viewed as ‘pure sources’, as being the product of public authority, with official credibility. ‘Impure sources’ were documents such as private letters and family documents, and were viewed as improper for archives (Jeurgens, 2013: 87), partly because they were unauthorized, often random in content, context and survival. Personal papers, then, have traditionally been viewed as less ‘archival’, less ‘reliable’ than those generated by organizations, and as they tend to yield information on the micro level, therefore less likely to be sources from which broad empirical conclusions can be drawn (Williams, 2008: 60). However, more recent understandings of archives see them as “sites where past experience is variously and quite imperfectly inscribed and where the art of re-creating the past can be practiced in some way” (Blouin and Rosenberg, 2006: vii), with the stress here still on ‘re-creating’. To some degree, then, the idea still holds that archives are a primary venue of historical knowledge (Eskildsen, 2013: 9). And also it seems that sustained intellectual challenges to ‘resurrectionalism’ have for many had surprisingly little impact.

It can be concluded that ‘archive’ is a slippery term, and to understand the nature of the documents that eventuate in the hands of a researcher, it is necessary to have an understanding of how documents are likely to have ended up where they are and why other documents did not. Hill (1993) provides a working overview of this process, which he describes as a series of sedimentary phases.

The first phase in the life of a document is its production by an individual or organization. A massive amount of documents can be generated in an individual’s or an organization’s lifetime, and only a subset will survive. This is connected with how individuals, organizations or social movements catalogue, organize and store documents, what they believe to be worth keeping, and what happens to those in their possession. The second phase occurs when an individual dies or an organization folds and documents are deposited in an institution, when a new set of individuals

(loved ones, co-workers, employees of organizations) set about the task of evaluating, discarding or preserving the personal papers of the deceased person or defunct organization.

The third phase usually receives the most attention, with documents arriving at an archive, which must then decide whether the documents will be kept, and if so they may go through a further phase of sorting, erosion, and arrangement of materials (Hill, 1993: 17). Archives in some cases have political leanings, especially when a state has an active interest in their contents, but they also have limited finances and physical space. Thus, an archive is likely to select in those documents believed to be of special interest to scholars or to some degree the general public. The papers of distinguished individuals in the metropole are prime candidates, while the letters of a lowly official or housewife in settler societies are likely not to be. Thus, archives are likely to over-represent certain groups and under-represent others; women, people of colour, the undistinguished, and the politically or socially undesirable, are likely to be ignored and lost to history, while white, male, distinguished Europeans are the most likely candidates for documentary survival (Lerner, 1986). Indeed, due to the relative absence of certain groups, researchers must summon considerable ‘counter-power’ to avoid replicating existing inequalities of representation or the types of discourses or interpretations wanted (Stoler, 2009; Huistra, Paul and Tollebeek, 2013: 5). Archives are themselves artefacts of history, then (Burton, 2005: 6). What this adds up to is that the ultimate substance of archives is the documentary fragments that it holds, and in interrogating these the first step is to build a “robust, imaginative, and interpretively responsible method of critical engagement with the past” (Burton, 2005: 21).

The fourth phase is the researcher, who enters an archive with a particular ontological and epistemological perspective, sorts through these ‘sediments’ and presents that which, given their particular worldview and aims, is viewed as significant. The researcher makes important choices regarding what is and is not important, positions characters and paints events; and crafts narratives and constructs lives. This does not mean that researchers must fall into a relativistic trap (Elliott, 2005: 152). If a heightened awareness of the knowledge practices engaged in is developed, if researchers critically reflect on and are open about choices made in the research process, then how interpretations and thus knowledge are produced can be better appreciated. This is usually referred to as reflexivity, the aim being not to divert attention away from the historical narrative and towards the researcher, but:

... rather to produce an analytic discussion of how their own theoretical and biographical perspective might impact on their relationships with research subjects, their interpretation of research evidence, and the form in which the research is presented (Elliott, 2005: 155).

At its most basic, then, there is a disconnection between history as an objective, factually based field, and the actual ways that knowledge claims are grounded and made. It can of course be argued that historians and other researchers are well aware of this disconnection and that the point

is self-evident. But, the degree to which the implications are fully accepted is in question. As Curthoys (2005: 369) states, historians are:

... still quite divided over questions of fact and interpretation, and positivist approaches are still very much with us. While many historians take divergent interpretation to be an essential part of the discipline, others ... still proclaim their histories to be objectively true and deny the possibility of different legitimate interpretations of the same historical archive.

Perhaps the first step is for researchers to accept that the past is irretrievably gone and cannot be recovered. This places restrictions on the degree to which it is possible to 'know' the past or 'reconstruct' it in some way. Of course, the past did occur, but how we come to know it is through the sediments, to use Hill's (1993) term, that have survived the vagaries of time. Historical research of all kinds cannot simply 'look back' using the remaining traces. This is not merely a postmodern suspicion of history, but rather that, as Darnton (2003) puts it, 'hard' facts have become 'soft' due to growing awareness of the artefactual character of historical research and the 'backstage' interpretational processes through which it is constructed and mediated.

Questions of provenance and credibility are relevant, but there is no reason to suppose that artefacts kept in archives are *a priori* more credible or reliable than those stored or found elsewhere. As formally constituted, archives tend to store a large proportion of extant sources; and they remain important sites for scholars, including because they play an important role in shaping the type and character of historical narratives that can be written through their role in deciding what is included and excluded from their collections. The contents are likely to be there as the result of social, economic and political pressures, pressures which make the history of the archive and the sources that are and are not there crucial to the histories that are told, because it is only by using existing and accessible documents that history in the sense of historiography can be produced (Burton, 2005: 6). Archives and the documentary and other sources they contain all have histories, and these play a powerful role in shaping the types of stories that can be told and how they are told, indicating that what is 'there' influences how the past is conceived.

Archives remain the basis of historiography, because the traces they contain, taken together, are all that is left of a given moment. But this does not mean that they are repositories of truth. Their contents often provide the cornerstone to a particular interpretation of history. Archives contain 'documents of life', that is, photographs, deeds, letters, promissory notes and so on that did not exist independently of people and were created in the moment to serve some particular purpose. These things were not created to embody a reality but were one representational means through which this was mediated, being products of the very processes that researchers are interested in (Ballantyne, 2005: 104). That is, they inscribe and reflect subjective interpretations rather than objective happenings or conditions. The 'raw' or 'primary' material on which history is based is already an interpretation, and such sources are also never complete. For instance, a letter can be

a means through which a relationship is mediated, but it represents a partial moment, with a before and after, and with much of the relationship occurring in the face-to-face and so lost in time (Steedman, 2001: 45). Historical sources thus do not contain origins or completeness but are documents of life through which ongoing processes, relationships, ideas and purposes are mediated and represented in highly partial ways.

‘Archival encounters’ (Burton, 2005: 7-8) concern the dynamics surrounding the process of finding and selecting sources. When researchers set out to collect data, they are constrained by numerous factors (including time and money) which shape where they can go and for how long. These constraints mean that not all possibly relevant sources can be consulted, and often compromises and some guess-work is necessary to find relevant materials. Finding this is a shaping process in itself. Researchers usually rely on secondary sources, finding aids, or even word of mouth to find relevant collections, all imperfect indicators of relevance, especially given that the organization of collections may have thematic or category headings that do not apply to a project. This process is further shaped, as Ghosh (2005: 27) points out, by:

... archival conditions beyond our control, conditions such as whether the archivist or librarian is sympathetic or drawn to the project, whether the proposed topic or research is congenial to particular types of national narratives, and whether the nation-state in which we do our research is invested in preserving and protecting the records we need.

Even if this partial, mediated and imperfect method of data collection is relatively successful in finding relevant collections, researchers then sometimes come to the realisation that the contents were produced for a very different purpose from that of building an understanding of an historical event, process, person or organization. As Steedman (2001: 1165) points out:

You know perfectly well that despite the infinite heaps of things they recorded, the notes and traces that these people left behind, it is in fact, practically nothing at all. There is the great, brown, slow-moving strandless river of Everything, and then there is its tiny flotsam that has ended up in the record office you are working in. Your craft is to conjure a social system from a nutmeg grater ...

If all that is left of an organization is one box of sources, the researcher must to the best of their ability develop an understanding of this organization from what is left. If what is left regarding an individual’s personal life is mainly letters to his daughter and wife, as with the Bodleian’s George Farrar collection discussed in Chapter 3, the researcher must try to produce an understanding of the relationships from just these letters. There may be other related materials that can further elucidate the topic of interest, but the range of remaining traces is always limited and usually does not increase. Such traces are often assumed to represent or embody the key ‘facts’ researchers would want to know. It is from the indications of love, actions made, reasons given, facts assumed, that researchers build their accounts using the scatterings left behind. In other words, historical research is a highly interpretive matter; such remains only make sense when mediated and interpreted by those who try to make sense of them. Researchers must try to

understand what these traces meant to people of the time and what this indicates about broader structures, relationships and institutions. Interpretation is by definition complicated, for individuals, institutions and historical periods will inevitably interpret things differently. As a consequence, how the past is imagined – history – often differs in time and place (Elias, 1983/2005: 5-6).

There are a number of ways that these very real challenges and limitations to researching the past and to writing about this have been responded to. Some retain the belief that historical research should pursue the ideal of positivism and down play the interpretive aspects of research, while others take these insights to the other extreme and insist that nothing can be known for certain about the past. However, the majority of historical investigations falls somewhere between these, and acknowledges the limitations although often accepting them with little explicit discussion of the consequences.

The first step is to acknowledge that these are major intellectual challenges and these need to be thoughtfully responded to regarding the materials drawn on as well as the role of the researcher. In this respect, Burton and contributors (2005) call for careful thought to be given to the pressures and processes which have shaped the remaining traces with which historical scholarship engages. While in many cases the history of the extant sources and the forces shaping inclusions and exclusions cannot be known, being cognisant of possible absences and silences, as well as the ‘voices’ marking the remaining traces, will make for a reflexive and more valid narrative:

We have to insist that a keen recognition of the vagaries of the archive and a desire for self-reflexive narration can go comfortably hand in hand with quite traditional disciplinary practices such as extensive research, careful interpretation, clear argument, and intelligible writing (Curthoys, 2005: 369).

What this adds up to is that, by taking fully into account the nature of the remaining sources, a thorough-going empiricism can be practiced. This calls for histories or stories of the production process of history, including encounters with archives, the archives themselves and the different materials they contain.

The second step is to recognise and explore the role of the researcher in the production of history and what is seen to count as valid research, how evidence is selected (what is deemed relevant), and how social processes are understood to play a role in the production of society at different temporal junctions. If the beliefs and valuations of the researcher remain implicit, many of the interpretations made will remain opaque (Curthoys, 2005: 368)

The third step is to overcome the implicit way in which individual researcher’s ideas shape writing about the past by adopting formal models or frameworks, in Eliasian terms a figurational model, that make these valuations explicit and help guide the researcher regarding what is relevant. Such frameworks can also offer more general explanatory guidance by focusing on some particular

aspect of social life and help link events and processes together. Equally important, these frameworks can also sensitise researchers to the fact that social life is constituted by both the unique and the general, again a point made well by Elias.

These three steps – exploring the remaining sources on which history is based, tracking the interpretational role of the researcher, and recognising the need for frameworks to link them together and explain their interconnections – are key to good interpretive sociological writing about the past, and I will later discuss how I operationalised them in an Eliasian approach regarding my own research. However, what is now discussed is largely absent from ‘epistemology of the archive’ discussions – this is what it is, precisely, that this literature envisages happening in the nitty-gritty of archival method. What now follows examines two particular aspects. The first concerns getting an initial purchase on documents and specifically personal papers and ‘documents of life’, in particular letters. The second is to consider the details of archival research as discussed in the relevant literature. After that, I draw my thinking in this chapter together around considering how the topics discussed take shape in my own research, an Eliasian-inspired project concerned with the South African past.

THE DOCUMENTS IN THE CASE

There are important differences between administrative records, traditionally given greater value as authoritative sources, as distinct from the remaining records of groups and individuals, who usually do not leave well-structured collections of materials (Williams, 2008: 60). What they *do* leave behind can be described as ‘human documents’: “account(s) of individual experience which reveal the individual’s actions as a human agent and as a participant in social life” (Blumer, 1979: 29), or as ‘documents of life’ which structure social worlds and help people make sense of their lives (Stanley, 2013). Indeed, formal documents compose only one of the varying forms that documents of life can take. As Watson (2009, quoted in Stanley, 2013: 4) points out, “Tattoos, autographs, text messages on mobile phones, bus tickets, pay slips, street signs, watch faces ... receipts, newspapers and magazines, road markings, parking tickets, computer keyboards, medical prescriptions ... cricket scoreboards, credit cards...” are all sources that do essential ‘work’ by helping people to understand and shape social life.

The use of personal documents has a long history in social science, going back at least to Thomas and Znaniecki’s *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* (1918-20), and before that to Weber. The relative neglect of these documents, according to Plummer (1983: 3), is due to a still prevailing positivism and seeing personal documents as not embodying ‘objective’ material. Since the early 1980s, there has been a renewal of interest in life story and auto/biographical work, as well as the methods they entail (Plummer, 2001; Stanley, 1992, 2004). However,

Plummer, in many ways the inspiration of this re-thinking, points out that some ‘documents of life’ have been seen as more problematic than others and largely ignored, with diaries and especially letters being cases in point. He himself, ironically, represents letter-writing in these terms, because, “letters speak not just of the writer’s world, but also of the writer’s perceptions of the recipient” (Plummer, 2001: 54), and so they suffer from what he calls a ‘dross rate’: letters are not focused enough on the researcher’s analytical concerns, ‘just’ those of the letter-writers and their addressees.

A documents of life approach aims to “capture the continuous, lived flow of historically situated phenomenal experience”, to gain an “intimate familiarity with a life”, and to “see experience and life as fluctual praxis, always in flow and ever messy” (Plummer, 2001: 7). Plummer also emphasizes that “there must be virtue in sustaining an undercurrent of sociological work that strains against the dominant tendencies and persistently reminds the scientific sociologist that for all his or her neat abstractions, concrete human beings many not tidily bend before them” (Plummer, 2001: 9). In other words, it is important to separate the data from the method, because, while documents of life may be suitable in elucidating the particular, they may also be suitable to elucidating the general and the interplay between the two.

Of course people do experience their lives as individuals, but as Elias points out, individuals are social to their core. Regarding auto/biographical work with documents of life in sociology, Stanley (1992) has argued that it is not possible to get at the true, essential self, with auto/biographical work being likened to working with a ‘kaleidoscope’; “each time you look you see something rather different, composed mainly of the same elements but in a new configuration” (Stanley, 1992: 158, see also Merrill and West, 2009; Roberts, 2001). Thus, it is not possible to ‘capture’ an individual or come to know them in any real sense. What we do come to know about them is unavoidably partial and interpreted based on the particular viewpoint of the scholar.

Thinking more specifically about letters, the staple component of many archive collections, letters have been used mainly as a resource for extracting factual information, while more recently the emphasis has turned to the performative, textual and rhetorical aspects of letters and the ways in which they inscribe ‘a world’ (Stanley, 2004: 211). The first aspect pointed out by Stanley as a strength is that letters are dialogical and in correspondences they are a communication or exchange unfolding between people. Thus, letters are always written with an audience in mind, they are often part of a series and often refer intertextually to previous letters or the expectation of a future letter. This relates to Stanley’s (2004: 202) second point of strength, that letters are perspectival; they do not simply record events from a single point of view, but rather their context and structure changes according to the particular recipient and the passing of time. This includes the use of a particular ‘voice’, depending on who the recipient and audience of the letter is.

In addition, Stanley (2004: 221-223) emphasizes that, however ambiguous it is, there is indeed a connection between lives actually lived and how letters represent this. Letters are written by a living person located in a particular material and social context, and their correspondence involves other people similarly located. And sometimes loosely but often very directly, letters and correspondences describe aspects of this context and the place of these people within it. Letters are often written in relation to events that are unfolding; they are written in the climate of the present and thus also hold how someone experienced or thought about that moment as it happens. They have, in other words, an emergent property that assumes knowledge and understanding, and their content is not shaped by researcher-determined concerns but those prevailing at the time of writing.

As Brewer (2008) points out, letters provide accounts of events and opinions, acting as a window into a subject's life, but with both strengths and weaknesses. Letters open a window into the everyday aspects of people's lives and relationships, while the contents of letters are often partial because so much is assumed between the correspondents and so they have strong elliptical aspects. That is, they speak of the writer's world as shaped in anticipation of the addressee's response. In this respect, understanding the meaning of a letter can be greatly assisted by knowing who the respondent is and what their relationship is with the writer, as well as having both sides of an exchange. However, both sides to a correspondence rarely survive, and the loss of one aspect means that much of the meaning of a letter is lost. Consequently, it is useful to think about someone's 'epistolarium', that is, the entirety of the letters that have survived the vagaries of time and also their relationship with all the letters that the individual is likely to have produced in so far as this can be gauged from the remaining traces (Stanley, 2004: 204-211). These considerations in turn have important implications for the claims that can be made, about 'the letters' in themselves, as well as that which they are referential to: a life, an event, an organization and so on. All knowledge-claims are based on what exists or 'as far as we can tell', as sediments of a broader epistolarium which in turn is a partial mediating tool of broader relationships and processes.

Many letter exchanges are interspersed with face-to-face encounters, what Stanley (2011: 13) terms their 'interrupted presence', although these encounters are often not mentioned overtly in further epistolary exchanges. The vast majority of the ordinariness of daily life (as well as the odd extraordinary event) is fragmentarily and sometimes quite haphazardly recorded or represented through a collection of letters. For example, it may be possible to know 'factually' that a war occurred in South Africa and to know some details about it as well as a letter-writer's particular perspective, but not the event in its totality. However, this is by no means confined to documentary analysis or epistolary scholarship. Every source of social scientific data has its limitations; there is no way to somehow 'capture' all of social reality. But much can still be gained. In the study of

elites, for instance, documents of life are intellectual gold, with the private correspondences of such people providing rich glimpses into their lives, activities, networks and power dynamics.

Fundamentally, a collection of someone's letters is the record of an individual with contents having a sequential and chronological form, and as a particular kind of epistolarium, it consequently takes on a narrative-like form. And while there is not a straight-forward referential relationship between documents and lives, as noted earlier there is nonetheless a connection between lives lived and the letters produced in a life. Also, letter collections are often enriched by the existence of related materials: notes, cards, telegrams, diaries, memoirs, photographs, biographies, and sometimes also personal belongings. Such things give a telling glimpse into the lifestyle and identity of individuals. Bourdieu (1984: 173), for example, states that:

Identity is found in all the properties – and property with which individuals and groups surround themselves, houses, furniture, paintings, books, cars, spirits, cigarettes, perfume, clothes, and in the practices with which they manifest their distinction, sports, games, entertainment, because it is the synthetic unity of the habitus, the unifying generative principle of all practices. Taste, the propensity and capacity to appropriate (materially or symbolically) a given class of classified, classifying objects or practices, is the generative formula of a life style.

DOING ARCHIVE RESEARCH

Much of the authority of accounts of the past arises from a claim to knowledge because a researcher has been to the sources, the relics or traces of the past (Steedman, 2001: 145). While there is some truth in this, it is a necessary but not sufficient basis on which to base or evaluate scholarly work. This is because what the researcher does with these traces plays the major role in shaping how accounts of the past eventuate (Elias, 1983/2005; Baron, 2014; Gaddis, 2002; Steedman, 2002); such accounts are particular and often competing views of the past mediated by researchers (Baron, 2014: 173). But how does this happen? The practical activities seen to be involved in archival research are now discussed.

At its most basic, the writing of those who engage with the past is composed by inferences drawn from surviving documents and other traces (Howell and Prevenier, 2001). However, these inferences are typically not about the documents themselves, but what they are seen to indicate regarding the past itself, a prior pre-textual reality which the remaining traces are seen as indexical of (Steedman, 2002: 154; Baron, 2014). However, documents only very rarely directly engage with events seen as historically important, and so the ways in which historical 'happenings' or 'events' are understood using the remaining traces will be different from what actually happened (Steedman, 2002; Baron, 2014; Gaddis, 2002). While certain things did happen (the past did occur), it is the researcher working with the vestiges of the past, small sometimes unconnected fragments, that turns them into evidencing a topic or event through the activities of investigation,

analysis and writing. It is the interpreted indications of what documents are seen to index that researchers turn into a ‘something’ about a particular aspect of the past. In making historical documents ‘speak’, researchers need to manipulate time and space, by compressing or expanding time or by focusing on broad structures and processes, the broad sweeps of history, mid-range processes and events, or some minute details of social life (Gaddis, 2002: 17). Further, in constructing their narrative of events, they must take things which occurred in a chronological order and place them in a logical-narrative with a discrete beginning, middle and end, while knowing that this often differs from a strict temporal sequence, and that few things have such clear points of origin and conclusion (Gaddis, 2002: 19-20; Steedman, 2002: 148).

Part of this involves deciding what is most relevant to the argument, story, or narrative being produced, and choosing those features which pertain to the view being put across and ignoring details which seem irrelevant or unconnected. Most research thus involves what Plummer (2001) calls a process of ‘amputation’, of selecting just those features relevant to a point of view. These processes of selection, amputation, the manipulation of space and time, the formation of logical-narrative order and accompanying decisions about relevance and importance, entail that the literal representation of reality is neither the task nor the aim of narratives of the past (Elias, 1983/2005; Gaddis, 2002: 17); and the choices, viewpoints and, importantly here, activities of the researcher are as important to how we understand and come to know the past as the remaining evidential traces on which claims rest.

There is no certified method for researching the past, although introductory writings on historical method stress the need for a careful plan of study, and often offer guidelines of what are seen as the most effective research practices (e.g. Elton, 1967/2002; Brooks, 1969; Hill, 1993; Jordanova, 2006; Storey, 2012). At the same time, the literature discussed earlier indicates greater complexities and provides many caveats to such ‘it is so’ suggestions. Consequentially suggestions in the introductions to archival research are now considered around three broad domains of activity, while recognising that these are interdependent and greatly overlap. These are preparation, fieldwork, and analysis and interpretation.

PREPARATION

The first step in archival research is typically presented as reading all available secondary sources on the topic, event, organization or person of interest (Duff and Johnson, 2002; Elton, 1967/2002: 60). The secondary literature is indispensable for finding references to other secondary sources (through footnote and reference tracing) and for establishing relevant archival collections (Duff and Johnson, 2002; Hill, 1993). From such secondary sources, Hill (1993) and Brooks (1969) advise that a master bibliography be developed, listing all relevant published sources about the

research topic, as well as making a preliminary sketch of what is so far known about it. Within this latter, key dates, people and places should be recorded, and important situations and events. This preliminary overview is useful for identifying gaps in the researcher's knowledge of the topic as well as in the literature, forming the basis on which further contextual knowledge is developed, which in turn will become the framework through which data is sought, selected, analysed and interpreted. Such reading will also be the basis of the questions, problems or gaps in the literature that a researcher is interested in filling, and a tentative view of what evidence is needed to address these questions is gained (Brooks, 1969: 19/74). From the preliminary sketch, Hill (1993) also advises for the construction of a master name list, which can include organizations, institutions and people, including brief information about each.

In order to identify a feasible topic from the literature, Storey (2012: 11) advises that a 'small story' be selected within a broad range of interests, one which appears to have the best available sources. Within this, the topic should be narrowed down through a number of possible techniques, including selecting a discrete number of individuals, places, a time period, based on the availability of sources or a combination of these. However, Stanley grapples with the pressing question of, if the past is infinite and the remaining traces immense, how does a researcher find a way through this?¹

Of course, all those dynamics surrounding the production of history define secondary sources, and as a result these should be approached with critical judgement regarding the selection of sources, what was consulted, how the author seems to have interpreted these and connected them into a logical narrative, and the views, beliefs and assumptions of an author. In sum, it is important to have some bearing on the sources as this is what people base their claims on. It is also important to note that a researcher is unlikely to have consulted all possible sources, and to focus on some features over others. Thus, secondary sources should be viewed as helpful indications of sources, the people involved in past events, and some understanding of the structure to the history concerned, but not as definitive, and as the start and not the conclusion.

FINDING SOURCES

From this basis, the introductory literature indicates potentially useful materials, including archive collections, which can then be sought. Prior to this, it is of course important to know what exactly one is after and why, with this requiring a well-defined and feasible topic of study. However, it is not possible to develop this in the absence of knowledge of the available relevant sources, and as a result preliminary inquiries into what exists and where plays an important role in focusing down the topic of interest (Brooks, 1969: 14; Storey, 2012; Elton, 1967/2002: 60). This does not mean

¹ Whites Writing Whiteness: <http://www.whiteswritingwhiteness.ed.ac.uk/blog/the-great-cory-library-fieldtrip-blog-29-method-i-scoping-and-detailing/>

searching for particular evidence to answer a particular question, but rather becoming knowledgeable about the primary sources and what is possible to investigate from these and what not (Elton, 1967/2002: 63). Where the relevant sources are limited, Elton (1967/2002: 63) advises that anything relevant should be consulted, but other ways of focusing need to be developed too.

From the preparation stage and a consideration of secondary sources, the guidance is that a list of potential collections and the archives in which they are held should be developed. The next step is to establish whether consulting these collections ‘face-to-face’ would be useful, and whether there are other collections of interest. There are four main ways in which this can be done: using online catalogues which list collections and occasionally inventories of specific collections; obtaining physical paper inventories; using more detailed finding aids, mainly accessible only in an archive; and finally by asking people who may know (Storey, 2012; Hill, 1993; Brooks 1969; Brundage, 2013). Online catalogues can be very useful in pointing to specific collections that may be useful, but like paper inventories and other finding aids, these often only feature collections believed to be of widespread interest and invariably exclude accessions or collections added after inventories were compiled. The master name list is important here, and Hill (1993) suggests that researchers should use all the names in this as search terms.

Where a specific collection has been thought potentially useful, the next step proposed is to gain more specific information about it, by looking at what is publicly available and attempting to gain digital or physical copies of any inventories or finding aids. These often (but not always) provide a fairly detailed overview of what collections contain, and it is best to find and access these prior to fieldwork where possible (Hill, 1993). Useful material can often be found, using Hill’s (1993) terminology, in both the primary sedimentation, a collection specifically focusing on the topic of interest, and secondary sedimentations, those which are related and may contain materials of interest. There is no guarantee relevant materials will be found in the same place, and so a sensible fieldwork plan includes adequate time with a collection/s as well as investigating those likely to be more marginal. Indeed, as Hill (1993: 49) points out, it is imperative to visit these other locations, as studies based solely on one collection, unless about that collection specifically, risk “factual inadequacy and intellectual distortion”. As part of such planning, contacting an archive prior to visiting to ensure it is open on relevant dates and that access to collections is possible, establishing the existence of finding aids, and simply informing archive staff of the topic of research and the dates of a fieldwork trip, are all helpful.

In all this, it is important to understand which type of primary sources are likely to be useful to a particular project. There are roughly two types, namely manuscript and published sources. Manuscripts usually include letters, diaries, and memoranda, often private and intimate documents, while published sources include newspaper articles, congressional debates, annual reports and so on, often intended for public consumption (Brundage, 2013: 20-21). Manuscripts

are generally better for gaining familiarity with a person or organization, the points of view involved, and the context in which events occurred, while published sources are better suited to understanding broader matters and ‘public’ glosses of these. For both a processes of selection and shaping has been involved. Many organizations would have an interest in hiding or obfuscating sensitive material and also vary in their recording practices, while those whose papers are archived might anticipate that these would not remain confidential after death so purposefully remove sensitive items. The study of sources is therefore important and meaningful, not just their content. This is why it is crucial that the largest possible number of sources are consulted; in order to gain an understanding of potential silences and the role these may play in how narratives turn out.

FIELDWORK

The initial aim when entering an archive is to gain an understanding of its ‘geography’ (Duff and Johnson, 2002: 481). Hill describes archives as ‘black boxes’, as the degree to which it is possible to fully know what they contain is always partial and limited, and he conceptualises an archive as “a warehouse of unknowable size stocked with innumerable boxes, each filled with a large array of individual items which may or may not be adequately inventoried and catalogued” (Hill, 1993: 48). The best way to gain an understanding of this geography is through the general catalogue, finding aids for specific collections, and sometimes by speaking to archivists.

Finding aids usually provide a brief outline of a collection, its structural organization and possibly a short description of items within it. Finding aids can serve many purposes and can be read as closely as the primary material itself. This is because they can tell much about the logic behind the creation of an archive and specific collections, what is included and excluded, and if archivists may have put items of potential interest within other collections. In addition, finding aids can also be a source of new names and keywords. Consequently, finding aids are of immediate attention when entering an archive, should be scrutinized in detail, and are likely to be re-examined several times during the research process as further contextual knowledge is gained.

Archivists sometimes, but not invariably, know the collections in ‘their’ archive and may be helpful in directing a scholar to relevant items and collections. However, frequently they do not know the detailed contents of these, and nevertheless can only be as useful as the specificity of requests (Duff and Johnson, 2002: Hill, 1993). This is an unavoidable aspect of archival research, including because many collections remain uncatalogued and inaccessible.

It is usually not possible to consult and examine every item in every relevant collection, and so choices must be made of which collections and items are most likely to be relevant to a project. An important skill in doing so is seen as the ability to scan through collections and record which items are relevant for further study. Inevitably, this is an iterative, non-linear process, because “questions get reframed and refined, sources get revisited, and finding aids get re-examined as

[scholars] build their contextual knowledge and increase their understanding of the research topic” (Duff and Johnson, 2002: 480). The process of selecting and reading relevant items further develops understanding of the topic, which in turn further influences the selection process.

It is at this stage that the researcher needs to be most aware of the ways in which the boundaries of the archive shape what can be said and how this has been mediated. In other words, it is important to be mindful of the logics of power which acted on the documents and may have attempted to manipulate or distort views of the past, or the way in which “archivization produces as much as it records the event” (Derrida, 1995: 16-17). This is so even within the particularities of each archive and requires that archives are to be used in a more self-conscious way (Baron, 2014). Indeed, as a researcher’s personal encounter or experience of archives plays a role in how narratives turn out, it is important to be reflexive and record the actual experiences within the archive, including difficulties faced, the logics of selection, decisions made and encounters with documents and people within archives (Burton, 2005: 7-8).

RECORD-KEEPING AND NOTE TAKING

One of the main challenges in doing archival research is deciding what and how much to record. Recording too much may take up valuable time that could have been used in researching other sources, while recording too little leaves a researcher with an inadequate dataset. Decisions about record-keeping (meta-data which records names, date, and addressee and so on) and note-taking of content (notes, also making verbatim extracts and transcripts) affect the grounding of analysis and interpretation, as well as the accuracy of references and quotations, are all seen as important (Brooks, 1969: 74; Gidley, 2011: 271). A rule of thumb is emphasised as ensuring enough information is collected so as not to depend on memory for factual items or quotations. Brundage (2013: 119), however, suggests that the researcher should take note of only those facts believed to be necessary in later analysis, although how to know this in advance is not explained. Thus a sense of balance is required, which comes with practice. For each item recorded, Brooks (1969: 75) advises that the repository, the collection, the number or identity of the document, and the substance of interest should be recorded. The focus and objectives of the research should direct these, but this is not always as easy as it sounds because the objectives of a project may well change during the process. As a result, as Brooks (1969: 77) suggests, it is better to record what is not needed later than to have not recorded what is later seen as important. Indeed, views as what is considered important generally change during or after fieldwork, and thus room for manoeuvre should be ensured and any strictly defined notions about a subject tempered.

In addition, all activities in an archive, including collections consulted, how thoroughly they were examined, collections not consulted though of potential value, problems and difficulties met, the chronological scope and arrangement of the materials, and general observations, are helpfully

summarised in much of the introductory literature. But how much is enough? At what point does a researcher have enough data to answer the research questions satisfactorily is difficult to gauge, for it is rarely ever possible to ‘complete’ a research project or answer a question with absolute certainty (Steedman, 2001). However, it is generally accepted that some measure of this has been achieved if the sources noted point to a recurring picture (Howell and Prevenier, 2001: 84).

The central paradox of archives is that these are constituted by both absence and excess (Steedman, 2002; Baron, 2014: 110). It is not possible to record or get through everything, nor is everything there. There are incredibly few times in archival research when ‘finding something’ crucial happens. Instead, it is more a matter of working with tiny documentary indications from which the researcher must build their interpretations (Steedman, 2002). At this point, the task becomes one of actually analysing the data, then the interpretational one of explaining them and connecting them into an account concerning some aspect of the past.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

When a researcher opens the first folder and reads the first document in a collection, the guidance is to keep in mind that, however seemingly enigmatic, each document is there for a reason; someone in the past wrote it, and had a reason to do so (Cox, 1988: 74). The business of research is to evaluate it and determine its meaning. This work of selecting and analysing documents has long been considered the backbone of historical investigations (Howell and Prevenier, 2001: 1-2). It involves skills sometimes referred to as external and internal criticism (Garraghan, 1946; Brooks, 1969; Howell and Prevenier, 2001: 60-68; Gidley, 2011: 271). External criticism usually refers to assessing the genuineness of any document, but is also an important initial step in understanding it. It includes determining what type of document it is, who produced it, the date it was produced, where, under what conditions, whether different forms or versions exist, and why it was produced (Garraghan, 1946; Brooks, 1969; Howell, Prevenier, 2001: 60-68; Gidley, 2011: 271).

Internal criticism has to do with the meaning or significance of the content of a document, and concerns what the evidential value of its content is (Brooks, 1969; Garraghan, 1946; Dobson and Ziemann, 2009; Bloch, 1954/2012: 66-91). Questions usually asked include: What main points are being made, what values does the content reflect, who is the intended audience? Extrapolating from this, how reliable is the source and what are its limitations, how does it relate to other relevant sources from this period, and how relevant is it to the research topic?² Scott presents this rather too simply as grasping how distorted a document’s content is likely to be (Scott, 1990: 22),

² The National Archives: http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/palaeography/where_to_start.htm

rather than a more usual emphasis on point of view and that all documents have specific location and origins. Relatedly, inaccurate sources can be useful because sincere accounts of the writer's perceptions and experiences, or because they evidence deliberate attempts at distortion.

Another more sociological way of thinking about the analysis of documents is by analysing the production of a document, its use and its content (Prior, 2003: 4). The first step here is to recognise that documents are situated, social products: they are situated within specific discourses, they are constructed in accordance with rules, express a structure, and their very existence depends on collective and organized action (Prior, 2003: 13). The individual author is of course important, and they are defined by their own positionality, history and interests; but this is only one side to a many sided process. Individuals did not produce the discourses and frames of reference through which they think, define motives and interest and define themselves and others. In other words, a document can tell as much about the 'social worlds' of individuals as they do about the individuals themselves. And because discourse or frames differ, based on how individuals are positioned within society and the figurations into which they are interwoven, glimpses into the inner workings and logics of groups of individuals can be gained through the documents they produce.

In analysing a document such as a letter, it is important to keep in mind that those who read them are not passive in the process. When writing a letter, people will write with the respondent in mind and thus the respondent shapes how a letter is produced 'at a distance' (Prior, 2003: 16). Also, documents are not simply passive vehicles but can play an active role in shaping the social world by requesting actions, providing information, giving consent and the like. They also often reflect what are referred to as performatives, whereby in speaking the speaker also does something, such as 'I promise', and can be useful in understanding what it is documents 'do' (Prior, 2003: 67). Documents can also give expression to systems of hierarchy, serve to define social networks by marking off social grouping and organizational positions, and have 'structuring effects' (Smith, 1984), and are thus central to the patterning and organizing of everyday activities (Prior, 2003: 67).

The content of a letter or other document is perhaps the aspect most discussed, and this can range from the simple counting of words/phrases to the more complicated business of drawing meaning from it. The ultimate purpose is to gain an understanding of the meaning and significance of such documents, but questions regarding the meaning of a text are often not straightforward to address. Nonetheless, it is possible to draw out a number of practical guidelines. First, those who work with texts take it for granted that texts have meaning. Second, this meaning needs to be grasped or understood. Third, in order to understand a text, some degree of interpretation is necessary. Finally, grasping the meaning of a text is often elusive, as its producer may have died or forgotten what they originally meant, and it is also questionable whether people themselves know what they

‘truly’ meant or even if there is such an ‘original meaning’ (Prior, 2003: 113; Derrida, 1995/2005). A text, produced by a particular person or persons in a particular place and time period, can be understood or read in different ways. But this does not mean there is an indefinite number of possible meanings as its content defines the limits of potential meanings (Bruzzi, 2000), in conjunction with the particular theoretical framework through which it is understood.

An acceptable reading will be within the bounds set by a document which, if a letter, is located within an epistolarium, a plausible conceptual framework which includes a degree of reflexivity in thinking about how researchers respond to documents regarding both affect and intellectual levels (Baron, 2014: 45). Reflexivity refers to the ability of the researcher to account for their own sense, making so that they become aware of their research activities and their consequences (Roberts, 2001). As texts can hold multiple meanings, the first question is precisely what and whose meaning a researcher is after, and how much this interpretation is theirs rather than the person or group or organization concerned. Consequently, a major task of the social sciences is to study how ‘ordinary people’ recognize and impose order on events as they unfold in the everyday world, or the way in which people make sense of the situations that they encounter and how they classify them (Prior, 2003: 32), with these things surfacing in archival documents. As Prior points out, “in every arrangement – no matter how puny – there is a world-view to be studied and analysed” (Prior, 2003: 48). People assemble, in writing and speech and other ways, accounts of their actions and how they understand the world around them using culturally available ‘good’ reasons, ‘worthy’ motives and ‘sound and acceptable’ explanations (Prior, 2003: 90-91). The analysis of a document’s content, then, involves ‘dismantling’ it in order to analyse signs of these assumptions and concepts and to reflect on both those who produced a text, its intended recipient, as well as the people and events reported upon (Prior, 2003: 47).

The interpretation of documents is not simply about assembling and ordering facts and is, as Howell and Prevenier (2001: 128) point out, as much an art as science, as much intuition as technique. Understanding requires a number of skills for interpretation is an iterative process whereby a researcher organizes and ascribes meaning to sources by repetitively reconsidering older data with the infusion of new data (Hill, 1993: 65). Jordanova (2006: 161) summarises some of these skills as:

Using historical materials and ideas in a coherent argument, showing their significance, especially in the light of other accounts, making convincing, plausible claims based upon research findings, and employing concepts, theories and frameworks appropriately. These are dependent on other skills: clear, logical and evocative writing, critical reading, making connections and the ability to see patterns and links, that is, to think laterally, integrating different kinds of materials.

Researchers must develop analytical frameworks that take into account the intertwined considerations involved in determining the meaning of a document. For example, in interpreting

the letters of Olive Schreiner (1855-1920, the role of individual biography, shifting identity and associations ('I', 'we', 'they'), context (political, social and economic; macro and micro), the 'actual course of things' and temporal factors, help shape in a complex, interwoven way the meaning(s) of these letters. In addition, Stanley (2002: 253-54) shows that there are sometimes differences in how categories ('we', 'they', 'black', 'white') are used depending on who the respondent is; so the respondent who is addressed indirectly influences how categories are framed. Also these categories change over time, and so the letters should not be treated just as interesting in themselves, but also in terms of how they relate to other sources. This also means that it is important to focus research on those aspects of meaning particularly pertinent to a particular research project and not to get lost in these interconnections.

As sources usually have several meanings, so researchers will often conduct a number of 'readings' (Brown, 1998: 33; Doucet and Mauthner, 2008: 405) of them, each time reading in a different way. This will be shaped by what it is a researcher wants to know, which in turn is influenced by the particular conceptual framework adopted. Thus, in the case of my own research questions, theoretical framework and objectives, a helpful way to approach interpretation is to begin with a general overview of what is happening, such as recurring themes, the chronology of events and key characters (Charmaz, 2005; Doucet and Mauthner, 2008: 405). It is also useful to think about the entirety of a collection at this stage, and reflect on what is there and what is likely to be missing, the limitations imposed by the shape of the sources, and how these things will impact on interpretations.

A second reading can aim to understand how a person of interest writes about himself or herself and the groups to which they belong or believe they are a part of ('we', 'them'). These categories are of course multi-layered and non-static, and often reconfigure overtime (Stanley, 2002), but importantly they also have implications for what people do (Elias and Scotson, 1965/2008; Stanley, 2002: 253). In other words, the aim is to gain an understanding of the world-view, the ideas and values which are taken for granted, and the implications for the ways groups of individuals act. This is to build a kind of meta-frame for whatever is being investigated.

The third reading is to gain an understanding of the boundaries of the figurations or other groupings into which the individual is intertwined, as well as their relevant relationships. Letters, for example, can reveal things about "the writer, the addressee, the specificities of particular epistolary relationships, and also the temporally-located socio-political circumstances" (Poutsie, 2014: 10). As Prior (2003: 67) points out, "the manner in which documents circulate and are accessed serves to mark off social groupings and organizational positions", and, while they may not necessarily reveal all of their social connections, letters offer valuable insight into the everyday "dynamics of micro-social worlds" (Spencer & Pahl 2006: 3) and the networks of letter-writers (Spencer & Pahl 2006: 45-46).

In conclusion here, the instructional literature is just that and provides indications of things a researcher should consider when doing archival fieldwork, rather than providing a checklist. The actual practices of research cannot be neatly summarised as set protocols to be followed, for there are quite simply too many different challenges, unknowns and contingencies involved, and methods guidance generally works with generalities and abstractions. However, archival research by virtue of its defining features is an iterative process and so difficult to fully describe.

BUILDING AN ELIASIAN METHODOLOGY: SOME CONCLUSIONS

There is no existing detailed and sufficient exposition of how to conduct an Eliasian study. Mennell's work on the civilizing process in the United States is interesting, but is in a number of ways methodologically problematic, while Dolan's (2009) discussion of the use of documents in a figurational approach does not proceed much further than to point out that researchers should attempt to understand the norms, disciplines and traditions of conceiving and communicating particular issues, why such norms change, and how these changes should be located within the dynamic context of broader social processes. While Elias would most likely have agreed, it is necessary to take the methodological discussion further than this.

The ultimate aim of the figurational approach is to understand and explain social change by focusing on the relationship or interdependences between people and groups of people, with the way in which these interdependencies play out over time being the real substance of social change. This is done by constructing processual and relational models of (con)figurations of people. While there are almost indefinite ways in which people interweave, the figurational approach focuses broadly on the interaction between material (power, wealth, prestige), psychosocial conditions (*habitus*), and the relationship between the two over long time-periods. While the emphasis is usually on broad, large-scale social change, Elias also emphasises the importance of research focusing on specific, concrete groups of individuals in order to show the micro dynamics that influence changes on a macro level. Importantly, these dynamics are relational, and their connection to macro dynamics is through processes.

In his own research, Elias showed how to construct such figurational models, emphasising that these need to be intensive, and take into account the messiness of real life. They should be 'real types', rather than Weber's ideal types, and retain the messiness of the social world. The aim of a figurational methodology is not simply to map the connections between individuals. It is also to construct an unfolding, long-term, processual and relational understanding. In addition, the aim is not to focus on the individual *per se*, even if analysis follows and investigates the life of an individual, but instead to develop an understanding of the structure into which individuals are

interwoven in order to understand this structure. This is because, from a sociological and Eliasian perspective, understanding this structure will help explain how (mechanisms, resources of power and action) an individual influenced or related to a broader process and why they did so (logic, habitus) by explaining the views a particular person has, the opportunities and constraints for action placed on them, the particular behavioural expectations of them, the identities and associations they have and so on. Of course, this is a lot to ask for, and the actual focus of Eliasian research will need to be narrowed down through each phase of work.

The first methodological step in a figurational study, I conclude, is to find key secondary sources and use these to gain a better understanding of and contextualise the time period of interest locating this within broader long-term processes, conditions and developments. It is also useful to have a broad outline of the timing of major events, processes occurring and so on. The secondary literature is also useful for understanding the figurations into which individuals were interwoven, as well as who they were and what relationship they had with others. In other words, the secondary literature should be used to frame and gauge to what degree the research questions might have already been addressed in other people's work, as well as determining what gaps exist in the literature. Thus, secondary literature should be used as far as reasonably possible to develop answers to the research questions, while keeping in mind that these are interpretations and cannot be taken at face value.

The second methodological step is to identify key primary sources, the core data that will be analysed. This starts by viewing the sources drawn on in the secondary literature as well as conducting a tailored search based on the gaps in the literature or newly formulated questions. One of the aims here is to develop an understanding of the 'geography' or shape of existing materials, what exists and does not exist, as this shapes the types of questions that can be addressed. Figurational research in particular requires longitudinal data, as it is this that can shed light on sociogenetic changes, habitus, and the micro worlds of figurations. Documents of life and letters, as opposed to the formal papers of organizations or institutions, are the most suitable.

The third methodological step is to recognise that there are a number of real challenges to archival work, as well as factors concerning the use, analysis and interpretation of documents of life that need to be explicitly dealt with. Primary sources are not 'objective' sources and nor is it possible to access the past through them. They are partial, mediated and largely mundane; much of the 'fever' associated with the archive is misplaced as there is little within sources that tell of large-scale matters, or even can be considered 'useful' in a direct sense to researchers. As there is in practice an endless amount of sources, drudgery might be a more appropriate term. A particular challenge is that it is not possible to gauge from their extant letters all the people that an individual had a relationship with, as only the people they actually wrote to and which have survived can be known. In addition, what is in their letters only partially reflects a letter-writers views, interests

or mental frames of reference. The result is that much of the meaning or final value of sources comes from the way in which researchers interpret and use them. As a result, these and related challenges should be discussed in figurational research, as well as the role the researcher plays, who should reflect on and record how their account is constructed, including how data has been selected, decisions made, how archives are experienced, as well as how documents are analysed and interpreted.

The fourth methodological step is that, once in an archive, the aim is not to record everything, but to gain an understanding of what is there and what can be sensibly done with it. What follows is to read as much as possible and record briefly what each document contains. From the understanding gained, the next move is to return to and record those items in more detail that are particularly pertinent in relation to the research questions developed. These specific items need to be recorded in detail and become the focus of analysis from a figurational and Eliasian perspective. This analysis should include the production, content, use and impact of a document, which will greatly assist in its interpretation.

The fifth methodological step focuses on interpretation. As meaning is interwoven and indefinite, interpretation can be helpfully separated into a number of readings of those dimensions most relevant to a figurational perspective. The aim is to gain an overview of the events and chronology, major protagonists, themes, some of the main 'stories' that occur as well as subplots, and also the context of writing and possible influence being dealt with.

The analytical investigations in the following chapters will focus on specific documents and aim to explain how individuals influence and are influenced by broader social processes. However, as sources are partial and limited, there is little knowing in advance exactly what types of questions and answers are possible as this depends on the sources and their significance. Thus there needs to be an iterative three-way traffic between theory, the real possibilities that the data offer, and the activities, decisions and interpretations of the researcher.

Building on the discussions in this chapter and with this Eliasian methodology in mind, Chapter 3 will engage in detail with the results of my archival encounter in researching the Farrar Papers and analysing documents from this.

CHAPTER 3: USING THE ELIASIAN METHODOLOGY: WORKING THE FARRAR PAPERS

INTRODUCTION: BRINGING THINGS TOGETHER, METHODOLOGICALLY

The previous chapters have developed two sets of ideas in relation to researching the Randlords and understanding the role they played in social change in South Africa. One involves the theoretical framework for my thesis, Elias's process sociology. The other is the related methodology for investigating the Randlords as a figuration so as to pinpoint the activities of different Randlords and the kind of influences they were able to exert. This chapter brings these together in a workable methodology, which I use to explore the letters and papers of one Randlord, George Herbert Farrar (1859-1915). George Farrar was a fairly important Randlord who is seen to have played a role in broad social changes in South Africa. Given the relatively small size of the Farrar collection, its contents provide a helpful means of exploring how these ideas play out in research practice and honing them for use in the chapters following. This chapter, then, is both methodological and substantive in its concerns, including in showing how matters of analytical substance and the details of methodological practices are intertwined.

George Farrar came to control one of the largest mining companies on the Rand, the East Rand Proprietary Mine (ERPM). While not of the stature, in terms of social, economic or political influence, of the likes of Cecil Rhodes, Alfred Beit or Lionel Phillips, Farrar certainly played a high-profile role in a number of social, economic and political matters which had a long-term impact on the course of South African history, through his activities as mining magnate and politician.

Eliasian theory begins with the insight that human beings are interdependent and always exist in pluralities or figurations. As figurations are part of sociogenesis, it is important to look at them over time and view them as social processes. Figuration is both key to Elias's thinking and important to comprehending the Randlords as a social grouping. A crucial component shaping figurations is their relationship to other figurations, which can usefully be thought of as over time changing patterns of established/outsider relationships. Established groups have control over material and psychosocial conditions and use these to maintain their position as an established group. Most societies are characterised by established/outsider relationships, and an important driver of social change is the interweaving between established and outsider groups over time. The ability to realise a joint purpose (the broad aims of the particular group) is dependent on ratios

of power, and the way in which things play out over time in relation to other (often competing) figurations, including from outsider groups.

An important mechanism of social change, then, involves the processes *within* figurations, and the relationships *between* figurations. The outcomes, sometimes planned and sometimes unplanned, will depend on the ratios of power between established/outsider groupings and figurations and how these pan out over time. In order to understand the role an individual plays in social change, it is necessary to look at the various figurations to which they have belonged in the past and which they continue to be part of in the present, and which are themselves always in a state of becoming or sociogenesis.

In my putting the Eliasian framework to work in this chapter, the methodological steps discussed in the previous chapter come into play. Discussion begins with how I used these steps to produce a grounded and reflective account of the research process I engaged in regarding the Farrar Papers. Does it all ‘work’ when put together, and do modifications need to be made? And what does it tell me about the Randlords? I consider such questions and my analytical findings in the conclusion.

FIRST STEP: THE SECONDARY LITERATURE AND THE CONTEXT

The secondary literature on Farrar is scarce both in terms of the number of relevant sources as well as their content. In terms of books, there have only been two studies that have focused specifically on the Randlords, by Emden (1935) and Wheatcroft (1985). Wheatcroft’s (1985) *The Randlords* is an indispensable source of references and offers a good outline, but is more a broad overview of the Randlords as a group than a specific analysis of individuals and how their activities relate to the group. Emden’s (1935) work has interesting content, but a complete lack of critical evaluation of this. Stevenson’s (2002) book also partly concerns the Randlords, but its emphasis is specifically on the extensive art collections some Randlords amassed as part of penetrating the British upper classes.

There are no works focusing specifically on Farrar, apart from overviews in the *Encyclopaedia of South Africa* (Johnson and Jacobs, 2011) and the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Pinfold, 2007).³ The most useful is Pinfold’s *ODNB* entry which goes into more detail and uses primary sources. However, the aim of Wheatcroft’s (1985) and Emden’s (1935) studies was to explore the Randlords broadly, while Pinfold’s interest was in producing a general biographical essay. As a result, while these sources are useful as overviews, they do not have sufficient focus or specific depth to be of sustained use. There are in addition a number of studies that have focused

³ <http://www.oxforddnb.com/>

on particular aspects of South African history in which Farrar features, including Bright's (2013) *Chinese Labour in South Africa, 1902-10*, which, although giving a fairly detailed account of the Chinese labour question, does not provide much understanding of Farrar's role in relation to this. Another useful source is Mawby's (2000) *Gold Mining and Politics – Johannesburg 1900-1907*. This provides an interesting discussion of the socio-economic hierarchy on the Rand, the white, British-identified community there and the prestige and power of members of its inner elite, including Farrar, and their role in shaping the gold industry.

Farrar was involved in a number of major and minor events in South African history, and his name appears across much South African historical literature over the last century. He is usually mentioned in passing regarding the Jameson Raid (see Harlow and Hamilton, 1957; Denoon, 1980; Walker, 1940; Webber, 1936), and here Blainey (1965: 363-364) offers a short discussion of why Farrar may have joined the Raid, to which Mendelsohn (1980) contributes discussion of Farrar's likely motives. Kubicek (1972) touches briefly on Farrar's financial dealings, and his later book (Kubicek 1979: 133-140) expands many of his arguments and provides perhaps the most detailed discussion of Farrar, in grouping together J.B. Robinson, Barney Barnato and Farrar in failing to pay share dividends, the poor quality of the properties they held, bad management, and stock-jobbing. There is some mention of Farrar and his silver mining interests in Reek's (2012) dissertation, while Dugmore (2009: 253) briefly mentions Farrar's ownership of the new town of Benoni through the New Kleinfontein Estates. Further useful discussions include Farrar's involvement in French investment in South Africa (Van-Helten, 1985), the Union of South Africa (Leacock, 1910; Torrance, 1998), the Progressive Association (Denoon, 1980: 128), colonial nationalism and the Milner 'Kindergarden' (Dubow, 1997), in breeding prize cattle (Keegan, 1986: 636), the 1913 and 1914 white worker's strikes (O'Quigley (1978), and the Chinese labour question (Huynh, 2008; Davies, 1976: 59; Davies, 2007: 59; Kooy, 1974; Ireland, 1918; Malan, 2007; Webber, 1936). From these, an overview of Farrar's life and involvements can be pieced together. The main aspects, which help set the scene regarding other Randlords too, are as follows.

Farrar was born in the UK in 1859, the third son of Charles Farrar (1832-1896) and Helen neé Howard (1830-1921) (Pinfold, 2007). The Howards were an upper middle class family of professionals; Helen Farrar's grandfather was at one time mayor of Bedford, while her father was the founder of the engineering firm Howard Brothers, which manufactured agricultural implements. Farrar first worked in an office in London. His grandfather John Howard had already taken George's eldest brother Sidney (1857-1917) into his firm, and when Farrar qualified as a

mining engineer, he took him into his firm as well.⁴ Percy (1857-1929), on the other hand, spent much of his life engaged in mountaineering, while the youngest, Fred, became Dean of Bedford.⁵

With an eye on the colonial market, John Howard had seen an opening for the sale of his ploughs and windmills in South Africa, and when Farrar was twenty-one, in 1879 he sent him and Sidney to the Cape to establish the sale of his machinery there. He changed the name of the firm to Howard Farrar and Company.⁶ Farrar and Sidney went to Port Elizabeth, from where they expanded the scope of the business into the Eastern Cape.⁷ Sidney met his wife Ellen Simpson there, marrying in 1882.⁸ George Farrar became a prominent athlete and rower.⁹

George Farrar remained in the Cape Colony and in 1886, he and Sidney installed the first mill for the Union Gold Mining Company in Barberton in the then-Transvaal.¹⁰ This was two years after the first gold reef deposit was found at Barberton. Farrar soon controlled some concessions, but the Barberton gold mines were not as productive as expected and in 1886 he moved to the Rand, where gold had recently been discovered.¹¹ The most significant reef deposits were discovered on the Witwatersrand in July 1886, and a number of farms were proclaimed as public diggings (Van Onselen, 1982: 1). The usual 'rush' followed, and soon what had been a stretch of empty veldt became a scene of enormous activity and the value of the land, both mining and residential, rose rapidly (Hatch and Chalmers, 1895: 2). Farrar had an advantage over many other speculators, for he was a qualified mining engineer with an already considerable knowledge of gold mining and had money to invest.¹²

The main Rand gold-bearing formations ran roughly east and west and mainly intersected with the surface of farmlands, and from 1886 they were predominantly worked by companies that were dominant in Kimberley. These were largely outcrop companies, requiring relatively minimal capital to sink shallow shafts, with native labour being relatively cheap (Blainey, 1965: 352). In 1887, there were 68 gold mining companies whose shares were quoted on the stock market, and in 1890 there were some 450. Many of the major mining magnates were by that time well-entrenched, including Hanau, Imroth, Eckstein, Neumann, Barnato, Bailey, Rhodes, Rudd, Robinson and Jeppe. By the end of 1890, Farrar was on the board of directors of eight gold mining companies, all on the Rand except for the Morgenzon Gold Mining Company located in Lydenburg. It is rarely recognised that silver and the base metal mining industry developed at

⁴ (Mss. Afr.s.1737/box 1/f.4)

⁵ (Mss. Afr.s.1737/box 1/f.4)

⁶ (Mss. Afr.s.1737/box 1/f.4)

⁷ (Mss. Afr.s.1737/box 1/f.5)

⁸ C. Plug, Biographical Database of Southern African Science, http://www.s2a3.org.za/bio/Biograph_final.php?serial=909

⁹ Mss. Afr. S. 2175. 12/4. F.8.

¹⁰ (Mss. Afr.s.1737/box 1/f.4); C. Plug, Biographical Database of Southern African Science, http://www.s2a3.org.za/bio/Biograph_final.php?serial=909

¹¹ (Mss. Afr.s.1737/box 1/f.5)

¹² (Mss. Afr.s.1737/box 1/f.6)

the same time as the gold mining industry in the Witwatersrand. Beginning in the 1880s, the 'Pretoria Silver Belt' came to be dominated by H. Eckstein and Co. However, Farrar, with his Witpoortje Syndicate, was also a major player and eventually the two merged their silver mining interests under the control of H. Eckstein and Co. to become the dominant force in the silver mining industry before 1900 (Reeks, 2012: 70).

Farrar's success is notable, as is the fact that he had not made his initial fortune in Kimberley, which the most prominent Randlords had done. In 1890, he was still engaged in Howard and Farrar and Co., with the company acting as agents on the Rand for the Sandycroft Foundry Company, a major manufacturer and importer of all kinds of mining, agricultural and general machinery (Edwards, 1890). When the gold mines opened in 1886, Sandycroft was overwhelmed with orders.¹³ The vast majority of speculators and syndicates did not have the capital required to purchase the stamp batteries, amalgam plates and mercury and so on and often could not hold onto or develop claims (Cartwright, 1965: 5). In addition, even if they did gain access to capital, representatives of mining machinery firms would book orders but could not promise delivery, sometimes with machinery taking as much as twelve months to arrive (Cartwright, 1965: 6). This delay led to the demise of many syndicates and companies. This gave Farrar a powerful advantage over competitors.

Kubicek (1979) proposes that the initial capital and resources required for Farrar's investments are likely to have derived from the Bedford engineering house. However, Farrar's business talents may have been underestimated. All the companies for which he acted as director acquired stamps and machinery from Sandycroft Foundry, as well as many other companies on the Rand doing so. As the representative for Sandycroft's, Farrar is likely to have made considerable profits, which he used to acquire additional companies, in turn ensuring that the machinery for these was purchased through the companies he controlled (Edwards, 1890).¹⁴ At this time, Farrar was on boards of directors with many key names including Woolf Joel, Barney Barnato, Abe Bailey, Harry Struben, Cecil Rhodes, E. Lippert, H. Eckstein, while Sidney Farrar acted as a consulting engineer for some of these companies, as well as being an alternate on the board of directors of four companies for his brother (Goldmann, 1892). By 1892, Farrar was on the Board of Directors of thirteen mines, including a silver mine and a coal mine.

In June 1893, Farrar married Ella Mabel Bell (c. 1869-1922),¹⁵ whom he had met on board a ship to South Africa in 1891. Ella was with her brother, who became the head of Bells Asbestos, and

¹³ <http://www.cofiadurcahcymru.org.uk/arch/query/page.php?watprn=CPAT103920&dbname=cpat&tbyname=core>

¹⁴ Sandycroft Foundry and Engine Co. Ltd. Sandycroft was by 1885 jointly managed by Arthur Channing Bicknell and Frank Taylor, the latter a well-known director of several gold mining companies.

¹⁵ Mss. Afr.s.2175. 17/2.f.32.

her sister.¹⁶ Ella and George had six daughters: Helen Mabel (born 2-10-1894); Muriel Frances (born 6-4-1896), Gwendoline (born 14-7-1897), Georgina Marjorie (born 17-8-1901), Kathleen Elizabeth (born 9-5-1907) and Ella Marguerite (born 28-4-1911).¹⁷

At this stage, Farrar associated with both the strongest and weakest entrepreneurs on the Rand. His partnership with Carl Hanau in 1892 formed the H.F. Syndicate (Wheatcroft, 1985: 158; Kubicek, 1979: 136). His associate John Crosbie Aitken Henderson helped form several East Rand outcrop mines and led to a directorship in ERPM when it absorbed these enterprises on its formation in 1893 (Kubicek, 1979: 163).¹⁸ Farrar also worked with the Ecksteins, among the ablest entrepreneurs on the Rand (and who helped Farrar launch the H.F. Syndicate), as well as having dealings with Goldfields Consolidated, the Barnatos and Neumann. The significance of the Ecksteins was that they represented what everyone on the goldfields needed, capital, and were the guardians of the interests of Alfred Beit (millionaire financier and friend and advisor to Cecil Rhodes). Through these associations and with the backing of the Anglo-French Company, Farrar was then able to obtain control of several blocks of contiguous claims along a six-mile stretch of main reef east of Johannesburg.

The H.F. Syndicate expanded quickly, with shares selling between double to eight times their par value, a product of the highly speculative stock-market. Thirty percent of these shares were initially held by the Ecksteins, also Wernher, Beit in London and Jules Porgés in Paris, as well as Anglo-French having a large holding, and Neumann a small interest. Perhaps most importantly, Farrar's further rise can be attributed to his capital being supplied through European links: London stockbrokers, and Parisian financiers through the Anglo-French Exploration Company. Anglo-French was created in late 1889 to exploit the first Rand mining boom, and included on its board Ernest Mocatta, George Cawston and Edward Wagg, members of the London Stock Exchange (Kubicek, 1979: 133). Cawston then diverted his attention to Rhodesia, and Farrar soon joined the company as its managing director in South Africa (Galbraith, 1974: 25).

In May 1893, Farrar founded the East Rand Proprietary Mine (ERPM), which acquired the assets of the H.F. Syndicate and additional properties, as well as adding deep-level ground to several mines which it already owned. The ERPM was formed to develop a four mile stretch of outcrop hitherto avoided by other mining magnates because of doubts regarding the payability of the ore and challenges in tracing the distribution of the reef (Mendelsohn, 1980: 169). Farrar remained its chairman for the rest of his life. His brother Sidney acted as an alternate for him on the board of directors, and the board was further composed of C.S. Goldmann, Lionel Philips (alternating

¹⁶ Mss. Afr. S. 1737/box 1/f.23.

¹⁷ <http://www.roll-of-honour.com/Cambridgeshire/Chatteris.html>

¹⁸ Henderson's Transvaal Estates contributed to the Rand's post South African War problems. Henderson was discredited when ousted as manager of Violet Consolidated by General Mining because of bad management (Kubicek, 1979: 166).

with G. Rouliot), J.C.A. Henderson (alternating with W.W. Wheeler) and S.W. Jameson (Goldmann, 1895a). The London Committee of the ERPM was composed of Alfred Beit, E.G. Mocatta, Edward Wagg and S. Neumann. By 1895 Farrar was on the board of directors of an additional twenty-three mine companies on the Rand, as well as a Rhodesian company (the Anglo French Matabeleland Company), and the Anglo-French Exploration Company. Anglo-French had large interests in the ERPM, the H.F. Syndicate, New Comet, Angelo, Driefontein, New Kleinfontein, and the Anglo-French Matabeleland Companies, and it acted as the London agent for these (Goldmann, 1895a: 137). Elements in Farrar's success included his ability to attract and use the capital of foreign investors, to associate with the right people at the right time, and to exchange favours with such.

The ERPM initially dedicated nearly a third of its capital to the reconstruction and development of subsidiary mines. However, due to their position on ground where the reefs were broken, these were far less productive than the central Rand mines (Kubicek, 1979: 134-135). Nonetheless, ERPM share value quadrupled during the so-called 'Kaffir' share boom of 1895, but declined by half in value in 1897 (Wheatcroft, 1985: 158; Kubicek, 1979: 135). The business strategy of Farrar and associates was to invest in speculative, short-term investments with the aim of generating quick profits, and as a result they were "perhaps as much discredited in Paris as Barney" (Barnato), with Julius Wernher having been told that Farrar was "lining his own pockets with capital raised for East Rand" Proprietary Mines (Kubicek, 1979: 135; Bright, 2013: 31).

At this point, a number of observations can be made. While the ability of many Randlords to succeed on the Rand depended on their previous success in Kimberley, which familiarised them with mining practice, helped them develop relationships with key individuals, and given them access to capital and sources of capital, Farrar did not have these advantages. It is probable that he met key individuals during his time in Barberton, including Taylor of Eckstein's, but it is unlikely they would have given him any significant help on the Rand. What *does* seem to have differentiated Farrar were the associations he formed on the Rand itself and his keen entrepreneurial sense, which gave him important advantages. Noticeable examples here include his associations with Eckstein's and the Anglo-French Company.

These connections were important beyond just financial considerations; while capital was one of the most important features distinguishing the success of early prospectors, access to the right information and the right people were paramount. The Corner House, where the Ecksteins were based, was a focal point of the mines and those 'in the know' were associated with it (Cartwright, 1965: 2). "Johan Meyer and his partner, Charlton, Henry Nourse, Edouard Lippert, Carl Hanau, Sigismund Neumann, Abe Bailey, Henry Struben, Hans Sauer, George Tilney, William Knight, John Jack – they had all been seen going in or coming out" as well as Cecil Rhodes and C.D.

Rudd (Cartwright, 1965: 2). Indeed, Farrar not only cooperated with Eckstein in gold, but ultimately shared his silver interest as well.

Carl Hanau and John Henderson, some of Farrar's earliest associates, on the other hand, proved to be weaker associates in spite of their early successes. By the 1900s, for example, if the control of at least one mine is taken as the criterion, Farrar's Anglo-French Exploration Company and his East Rand Proprietary Mines feature among the eight major mining houses, while Henderson's Transvaal Estates and Hanau's interests did not control any producing gold mines in the 1900s (Mawby, 2000: 32-33).

Farrar was undoubtedly a skilled businessman willing to take risks. After his name was included on the family business, he took a major risk at Barberton with what would have been at that time limited capital or capital backing, followed by another on the Witwatersrand. While this was in no way unique, what distinguished Farrar was his ability to associate with already established prospectors, and key ones at that, as well as his leadership in one of the most important resources on the mines – technology. He was in turn able to continue his rise on the Rand by spending other people's money, most importantly the Anglo-French Company, and diversified his interests into silver, coal, as well as expanding his original company into the sale of clocks and ornaments, by spotting a gap in the burgeoning economy. However, Farrar's ownership and association with what turned out to be less productive mines would undoubtedly have influenced many of his financial decisions and methods, as well as political decisions.

SECOND STEP: THE ARCHIVAL SOURCES

A useful exercise when approaching an extant collection is to consider content in (at least) four ways (Stanley 2011b): what remains and is available for present-day scrutiny; the entirety of the documents that a particular person wrote; the entirety of these documents together with all the replies to these; and the 'shadow' forms like quoted extracts, transcriptions and printed versions which are the result of third-party writings. Thought of like this, the Farrar Papers are part of a much larger body of documents; and while the exact shape and composition of the larger body of documentary materials that Farrar produced cannot be known, it is important to think about what the shape and composition of the surviving letters and other documents have for the analysis made and conclusions drawn.

The archival papers relating to Farrar are located in 'primary sedimentations' (Hill, 1993), focusing specifically on Farrar, with some 'secondary sedimentations', focusing on other people. There are two primary collections in the UK, the Memoirs of Sir George Farrar, composed of one archive Box (MSS. Afr. s. 1737), and the Papers of Sir George Farrar and family (Mss. Afr. S.

2175) composed of twenty-one archive Boxes, both in the Bodleian Library of Commonwealth and African Studies in Oxford.

Mss. Afr. S. 1737 is very much the creation of Farrar's daughter Muriel, not Farrar himself. Composed of 143 folios (or documents), the majority (88 folios) are a seven-chapter memoir written by her as well as two draft chapters. These memoirs are broadly a mixture of family experience and a generalised narrative pieced together from secondary sources. While interesting in its reflections on family life, it was written by a third-party some decades after the events took place (in the 1950s), and is largely uncritical.

Mss. Afr. 2175, by comparison, is composed of twenty-one boxes, and as a result cannot be itemized in detail. It contains over 1,500 folios, organized into the major themes and 'events' of Farrar's life: family mining activities in South Africa, Farrar's arrest around the Jameson Raid, the South African War, his political career, family social activities, World War I, his death and so on. A large share are newspaper clippings on family social activities, the Chinese labour question, Farrar's business activities and ERPM share prices, the Jameson Raid and Farrar's imprisonment, and later his death and funeral.

Regarding Farrar's business activities, the Farrar Papers contain minutes from the Chamber of Mines and Farrar's speeches at ERPM meetings, reports to shareholders by Farrar, public speeches made by Farrar regarding Chinese labour, items concerning taxes, government expenditure, as well as government inspector reports regarding a drop in ERPM share prices. There are, however, surprisingly few letters between Farrar and his brothers Sidney and Percy, who were in business with him for the whole length of his business career, although as his brothers were based in the ERPM London office it might be expected many letters or telegrams would have been exchanged. Indeed, there is surprisingly little on Farrar's business career in general.

There are two explanations for this. The first is that many of Farrar's business papers and letters are in the ERPM archives in Boksburg (South Africa). Access to this collection is, however, not possible. The ERPM is still in active economic existence. As a subsidiary connected with the 2013 Marikana massacre and its aftermath,¹⁹ it is the company's concern to control what is known about its history as well as its present-day operations. These 'internal' papers of the early days of the ERPM are not publicly available and because of political circumstances neither I nor anyone else would be able to negotiate access.

The second explanation has to do with the Farrar Papers bearing the impact of a number of people concerning how they wanted Farrar to be remembered, and the type of account they wanted

¹⁹ The Marikana massacre has been covered by most large news agencies and the *Mail and Guardian* provides a useful overview (<http://marikana.mg.co.za/>), as well as by Alexander, Lekgowa, Sinwell, Xezwi and Mmope (2013) *Marikana: Voices from South Africa's Mining Massacre* and other publications.

written about him. His daughter Muriel's memoirs, for instance, are flattering and uncritical. And after Farrar's death, his mother Helen asked Bertie Bennion, previously Farrar's secretary, to write the framework on which future biographers could build, with his three notebooks consisting of anecdotes under headings such as 'The Lighter Side of Politics', 'German S.W. Africa', 'Early Life'. These originally contained many loose pages of letters, notes and memoranda relating to aspects of Farrar's life that are now in a separate Box. Many of these are extracts from letters, selected to make particular points, introducing the problem of what was done with those that did not fit the account. Writing to Farrar's eldest daughter Helen Turner on 5 June 1959, for example, Bennion stated that "I feel sure that when you and (if it can be arranged) Mr. Davey [from the Pretoria National Archives Repository] visit Sunnyside we shall be able to arrange a good deal to show what a power Sir George was and how much good work he did... The notes I have written (22 quotes sheets) are intended first for you – to deal with just as you think fit".²⁰

The Farrar Papers were donated by Farrar's descendants George Turner (son of eldest daughter Helen); James Lowther, Lord Lonsdale (son of Muriel, Farrar's second daughter); and Ella, Lady Watson, the youngest daughter.²¹ On 30 January 1959, the Pretoria National Archives Repository wrote to Muriel to request the donation of any Farrar papers.²² Bennion tried to acquire as many surviving documents as possible. However, after Farrar died, such documents had been placed in the basement of the offices of Farrar Brothers in its London Wall building in October 1915 and these premises were later bombed in World War 2. The chief item remaining was a large album containing Farrar's speeches.²³ By this time, Farrar's executors (who carry out the directions of a will), Patrick Duncan (politician, later Governor-General of the Union of South Africa, and member of Milner's Kindergarden) in Pretoria and his brother in London, Percy Farrar, were both deceased, as were Walter Webbes and Gerald Carpenter, both engaged in winding up Farrar's estate.²⁴ Farrar's mother had had records of the Jameson Raid trial in Pretoria in 1896, although these seem to have been lost or destroyed. Later in 1959, Bennion, Mrs. Turner and Mr Davey, the Pretoria Chief Archivist, met in Johannesburg; and at this time Bennion began writing his notes on Farrar's life. The collection has clearly been arranged and contents numbered by a previous hand, who grouped items according to themes. As a result, each box has been shaped to tell some sort of story, and the documents almost invariably have some sort of 'significance' in relation to this.

There are relatively few letters to individuals apart from Farrar's immediate family, but of those extant, many names are considered 'significant' historical figures, although the content does not

²⁰ Mss. 2175. 21.3/26.

²¹ Papers of Sir George Farrar and his family (c1864-1982). Amanda Hill, 14 October 1996.

²² Mss. 2175. 21.3/27.

²³ Mss. 2175. 21.3/27.

²⁴ Mss. 2175. 21.3/22.

deal with political, diplomatic and economic matters of significance. They include Hubert Hamilton, a senior British General who served during the South African War; Dr Leander Starr Jameson, who was Rhodes's closest associate and led the Jameson Raid and later became Prime Minister of the Cape Colony; Alfred Milner, British statesman, colonial administrator and central figure of British imperialism in South Africa; Jan Smuts, Transvaal and later South African politician; British Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain; Richard Solomon, Attorney General of the Cape Colony and later of the Transvaal; William Palmer, Earl of Selborne, a British politician and colonial administrator, and Henry Harcourt, a barrister and Indian civil servant and his wife. The collection also includes some family letters. Six are by Farrar to his wife Ella and twelve by Farrar to his daughter Muriel. Of letters to Farrar, these consist of one from his brother Sidney, two from Farrar's mother to his wife, and one letter each from his mother to Selbourne and to Bennion. Overall, there are around thirty letters between members of the Farrar family. Notably, there are no letters, telegrams, or notes that reflect day-to-day dealings and events. As a result, it is difficult from this to gauge the shape of the Randlord or other figurations into which Farrar was interwoven, besides the fact of him having connections with some powerful individuals.

Figurational research ideally requires a rich and complete collection of materials replete in documents of life terms (Plummer, 2001; Stanley, 2013), data that can give insights into figurations of people over long periods of time. Nonetheless, this collection's contents can still provide insights into a number of key relationships and give some indication of figurations. One way to partly offset the limitations and possible biases of the Farrar Papers is to draw on other collections which contain documents relating to Farrar. In particular the 'Papers of Alfred Milner' (Mss. Milner dep. 1-698) in the Bodleian Library (Oxford) contains letters between Farrar and Milner, as well as there being a small number in the Papers of Sir Godfrey Yeatman Lagden (Mss. Afr. S. 142-214) between Lagden and Farrar, also in the Bodleian, while the Sir Charles Preston Crewe Papers held at the Cullen Library (University of the Witwatersrand) has a smaller number from Farrar to Crewe. I return in detail to the Milner collection in Chapter 5.

There are a number of themes and 'events' that Farrar is conjectured in passing in the literature to have influenced in minor or major ways. These are the Jameson Raid (1895), the Chinese labour question (1902–1910), the Cullinan diamond controversy (1907), the miners' strikes of 1907 and 1913, and two important business-related events: the formation of the ERPM (1893), and a share scandal (1911–1912).

The Chinese labour question is often considered Farrar's most significant contribution to the course of South African events. While not the first to consider or promote Chinese labour as the solution to a perceived labour shortage, he was the author of the first draft of a labour importation ordinance and became the public face of the Chinese labour proposal. The Chinese labour

question as a public issue occurred in the wake of the South African War (1899-1902) and involved the Transvaal, following the restitution of responsible government, legislating for the importation of Chinese labourers to solve a supposed 'native' (cheap, docile) labour shortage, thereby adding to the tangled racialized order that was more widely in the making. The importation of Chinese labour added 'Chineseness' to existing racial complications being re-structured and re-constructed after 1902 and particularly after the Union of South Africa in 1910.

The Chinese labour issue has been explored from various angles. An argument for the centrality of economic factors can be found in Richardson's (1982) *Chinese Mine Labour in the Transvaal*, while the political and cultural context has been explored in Bright's (2013) *Chinese Labour in South Africa, 1902-1910*. Neither discuss in any detail the role Farrar played. An exception is Huynh (2008), who uses one of Farrar's speeches to indicate the views of the mining authorities, as part of exploring how discourses around the Chinese labour question reveal the racial categories of the time. Interestingly, Davies (1976: 59) earlier analysed the same speech, although focusing on issues related to the use of un/skilled white labour by the mines.

THIRD AND FOURTH STEPS: WORKING THE FARRAR COLLECTION

Archival data are difficult to work with. Not only does the researcher not have control over what collections contain, and so cannot predetermine what can be known from them, there are also few generally accepted methodological texts guiding researchers in how to explore and make sense of archival collections and their contents. The 'shape' of collections is usually ignored, with researchers instead looking for specific, often predetermined items that are expected to answer a research question. The result is that what was expected, usually pinpointed from the secondary literature, is often found.

However, concerning the collected papers of individuals like Farrar and Milner, the totality of the documents involved will be indicative of wider and sometimes unexpected matters. On the micro level, such documents tell something about the relationships that people have with others over time, their ideas, concerns and world-views, associations and affiliations, daily habits and activities, finances and so on. If longitudinal enough, they are also able to show how these changed over time. Life documents can also reflect broader meso and macro structures and processes, including through the ways people represent or reflect on their experiences and understandings, and how these broader structures influence and shape their lives. The contents of collections have a 'flies in amber' character as part of a life lived and the broader, macro context it was lived in, which was at once structured, fluid and interwoven. Importantly, they also hint at that which is now lost, including conversations, ongoing relationships, and aspects of broader social changes.

A life lived, however, can never be fully represented through documents. The vast majority of a life exists in physical activity and words spoken. Documents concern just one kind of activity engaged in, ‘communication’, and one form of communication. The advantage of documents is that they reflect more than their writer’s original intentions and provide insights into other spheres of life, so that social scientists can use documents to understand structures, events and social processes (Scott, 1990; Prior, 2003; Stanley, 2015). But faced with a collection and its often many boxes of documents, then what next? I will discuss this by showing how particular documents from the Farrar Papers were selected, how they were analysed in relation to the larger collection, and how the resulting interpretations were pieced together. The Farrar Papers have a particular ‘shape’, brought about by natural attrition (Farrar destroying or throwing away items), the activities of his secretaries, what his respondents did with his letters, the way in which his family and colleagues shaped the collection to produce a particular account, the destruction of papers through (un)natural events, and the activities of archivists. Some sampling procedures were used to gain an understanding of the overall shape of the collection and, with my particular research interests, led to particular documents being selected to focus on.

BEGINNING, MIDDLE AND END: SAMPLING TECHNIQUE ONE

The first sampling method I used in getting to grips with the Farrar Papers involves what Stanley (2016) terms ‘beginning, middle, and end’. What exists within different sections of a collection is not directly related to the structure of a life (and many collections are of organizations or events) but to the way in which a collection has been ordered, so this form of sampling is to provide knowledge of the shape of a collection and its contents. The Farrar collection is composed of twenty-one Boxes. Boxes 2 and 3 were selected as a beginning, 11 and 12 as a middle, and 19 and 20 as an end, without any theoretical considerations guiding this.

Box 2 contains a single, large scrapbook containing hundreds of newspaper clippings. The vast majority relate to the Chinese Labour question, including how Chinese labourers were viewed, whether and why there was a labour shortage on the Rand, and the competences of different races (white, black, Asian), the threat that Chinese labour posed to white employment and skilled jobs, and the characteristics that different racial groups were said to have. These items are of background interest for my research. Box 3 is composed of four files. The first, of 43 folios, contains loose press cuttings and cartoons concerning Farrar’s business and political activities. These provide a glimpse into how Farrar was represented in the media and became a part of the public imagination.

The second file contains twelve items composed of 36 folios, including a typed letter to Farrar from the Chamber of Mines accepting his resignation, a formal letter from the Secretary of the Chamber of Mines (Donald Currie) accepting the resignation and thanking Farrar for services, a

letter from Farrar's brother Sidney debating the prospects for the family business in South Africa, the service held by the ERPM on the day of Edward VII's funeral, a government inspectors' report on the drop in the price of ERPM shares, a report to shareholders by Farrar, an ERPM annual report and minutes of an Annual General Meeting, a brief for a special meeting held by Farrar in London for shareholders.

The items relating to Farrar's resignation concern an event (the resignation), and so a moment in time when (sometimes implicit) structures and relationships come to the surface. These letters also raise the work Farrar did for the Chamber of Mines, how he explained resigning and what he would do next, and provide glimpses of longer-term activities and relationships. The letter from Farrar's brother is of significance, including because Sidney had acted as an alternative on many of the company boards that George served as chairman on. The final three items on Farrar's detailed business activities are interesting but beyond the remit of my focus; his business activities however can in part be glimpsed from a weekly London magazine, *South Africa*, which often commented on these from 1894, when the magazine was first published, until Farrar's death.

The third file, composed of 59 folios, contains four dictated letters from Farrar to his wife discussing the mine strikes in 1913 as well as domestic dynamics. These are interesting for a number of reasons. They provide insights into his view of the strikes and how he was involved, they convey aspects of his domestic life; and as there are a number of letters, they give a small glimpse of how events unfolded over time. The final file contains newspaper cuttings concerning a shareholders' meeting after a scandal over an ERPM share price drop, an 'event' connected with the forms of control and influence Farrar had over the ERPM as well as the bounds set on his actions by the shareholders, and which also indicates how dependent he was on such networks of people to maintain his social as well as economic position. These also connect with figuration, habitus and activities of considerable importance to Farrar as a Randlord.

Box 11 is separated into two files. The first is a volume inscribed 'Trip to Victoria Falls' and written by Ella Farrar concerning a trip which she and Farrar took to Victoria Falls, and meeting Frank Rhodes, brother to Cecil Rhodes, who took many of the photographs included. It offers a glimpse into their private lives, but shaped by the public image she was trying to represent. While a holiday, this was also a business and political trip for Farrar, who had interests in a Rhodesian mining company and took an active interest in the development of the white population in Rhodesia.

The second file is a volume of newspaper photographs and cuttings concerning the social activities of the Farrar family. These are of interest as a view of the lives of this Randlord family. The first folio, for example, describes Ella Farrar holding a farewell reception at their home at Bedford Farm for Sir Arthur and Lady Lawley in 1905, who were leaving for new duties in India.

Bedford Farm is described, as are the costumes of the guests, and the guest list numbering in the hundreds, composed of the leading lights of South African society, including other Randlords and government and military officials. The file also includes photographs of the event, numerous clippings of Farrar's daughters, as well as a defence of Farrar in a letter by an anonymous individual in response to an attack by Abe Bailey in a leading newspaper, discussed later. This is interesting as an insight into the relationship Farrar had with other Randlords. The file also includes a description of a celebration held by Farrar in 1907 for the Progressive election victory on the East Rand in 1907, and an extract from a magazine on 'colonial ladies married to Englishmen' which includes a picture of Ella Farrar on its cover. There are also two clippings about her involvement in the League of British Women as a vice-president, as was Lady Fitzpatrick, the wife of another prominent Randlord, discussed in a later chapter. The League of British Women played an active part in supporting the Progressive party's bid for government, pointing to Ella Farrar's activities in support of Farrar's political career. Finally, the collection also includes a newspaper clipping relating to a Unionist gathering after Farrar gained a seat in the Union Parliament.

Box 12 is composed of four files. The first contains two letters from Farrar to his wife, two letters from Ella Farrar to her mother-in-law Helen Farrar, a letter from Bennion to Helen Farrar, a speech by Ella Farrar, a note from Jan Smuts asking to see Farrar, and finally a newspaper clipping describing Farrar's work in German South West Africa during the South African War. These letters add to the previous letters between Farrar and Ella, while as already noted Bennion played a significant role in shaping the Farrar collection. The second file contains photographs regarding the work undertaken by Farrar's company in German South West Africa in 1915 to extend its railway and sink new wells to supply advancing troops (in World War I fighting) with water. File 12/3 contains wires, reports and statements regarding Farrar's injury and death, as well as his Will. The final file contains newspaper cuttings collected by Ella Farrar regarding Farrar's death and appreciations of his life. Here the 'event' of Farrar's death reveals his affiliations to individuals and organizations through the condolences made that would otherwise have remained unknown.

The final two boxes sampled are 19 and 20. Box 19 contains an album of family photographs of a ship voyage, as well as photographs of Cecil Rhodes's home (Groote Schuur) in the Cape, and a number of photographs of Frank Rhodes playing cricket. Frank Rhodes in fact appears in many parts of the collection. Box 20 contains watercolour paintings and eleven photographs of Bedford Farm and its grounds.

From this 'beginning, middle, and end' sampling, some conclusions can be drawn. First, these boxes contain documents concerning a number of important events, namely the Chinese labour question, the 1913 Labour strikes and the First World War, as well as a number of micro events

including Farrar's resignation from the Chamber of Mines, the ERPM share price scandal and Farrar's death, all of which are relevant to my research. Second, these boxes also contain documents that reflect personal and social relationships, although not in any detail. These too are relevant in figurational terms. Thirdly, it became clear that the *type* of documents that are extant will impact on what can be known regarding topics of research interest, as does the *number* of documents extant respecting these. And fourthly, from the results of this sampling approach some possible analytical themes emerged: Farrar as a public figure, Farrar's relationship with his brother Sidney in respect of the family business, the social life of a Randlord, Farrar's relationship with his wife and her role in his business and political activities, Farrar's involvement in the 1913 miner strikes, the ERPM and the forms of power it gave Farrar and their limitations, and Farrar's changing relationship with Abe Bailey.

However, as Stanley (2016) points out, this is not the only way that collections can be explored and their contents mapped, and it can be helpfully combined with other sampling techniques. Stanley mentions following particular names, locking on particular events or time-periods and so on, in order to add further breadth and also depth to knowledge of collection contents. Consequently, I then sampled the folios within boxes to look in more detail at some content.

THREE ITEMS: SAMPLING TECHNIQUE TWO

This second technique involved randomly picking three folios from each archival box. A folio is a general term for any numbered sheet or page. The underlying purpose is again to develop breadth of knowledge, with the aim of seeing if further themes become apparent or earlier ones further clarified. As Boxes 2, 3, 11, 12, 19, and 20 had already been explored, these were excluded. Box 1 contains a photograph album sent by Sidney Farrar from South Africa to his mother Helen in Bedford in March 1878. Box 4 is composed of two files, one of which is a 1913-1917 ledger of stocks and shares owned by Sidney and George Farrar, while the second is a letter to Ella Farrar from Percy concerning developments on the East Rand in 1918, after Farrar's death. Box 5 is a volume of telegrams concerning the imprisonment of Farrar following the Jameson Raid in 1896. Most items here are from Sidney Farrar in London to Farrar's mother Helen in Bedford providing daily updates. Box 6 contains a volume of newspaper cuttings, beginning with the arrest, sentencing and release of Farrar and other leaders of the Raid, followed by clippings relating to Farrar's death and that of his nephew John Harold Farrar (son of Percy) in World War One.

Box 7 is large, containing three files and over 60 folios. The first file contains a number of items relating to the Jameson Raid including a copy of a letter from FJ Coster, Transvaal State Attorney, to the Gaoler, Pretoria, requiring him to keep the four leaders of the Raid away from other prisoners as well as photographs of them in relative comfort. These documents say something

about Randlordism and their special treatment in prison, even in the Transvaal and under such circumstances. The second file contains a 1900 letter from General Kitchener during the South African War (1899-1902) that gave Farrar the right to organize the equipping and purchase of horses in the Cape for Brigadier-General Brabant's Colonial Division, a troop brigade, and to be able to travel by rail or ship to any part of the Cape Colony. Such allowances were extremely rare and indicates the political and military standing accorded Farrar (and raises the question of why he was granted such powers). The file also contains a 1902 telegram concerning Farrar's award of the Distinguished Service Order for wartime services.

Box 8 contains three files together containing 182 folios, all of which are newspaper cuttings and cartoons covering the period 1903 to 1912. Box 9 is composed of two files. The first contains mostly newspaper cuttings, but also some business, social and agricultural items. The second file contains loose papers removed from box 9/1; a speech by Farrar regarding the Chinese labour question at a March 1903 Bloemfontein Conference that is by far the most frequently discussed and referenced document in the whole collection, as it sets out the basis for Farrar's involvement in the Chinese labour question; it also contains his 1903 speech about a Transvaal Labour Importation Ordinance, which is interesting for similar reasons; and a speech on the Land Settlement question in the Transvaal delivered in January 1907 about boosting immigration from Britain. The latter indicates Farrar's views regarding the importance of the increase of white labour, while the labour importation speech discusses the logic behind the use of Chinese labour on the Rand. In addition, this file contains another 1907 speech by Farrar, arguing for less interference in South African affairs by the Colonial Office regarding native policy and calling for the South African States to have one single policy on this. These last speeches concern intertwined issues and are relevant to the relationship between established and outsiders in terms of both race and class. The file also contains a 1910 telegram from Jameson, asking Farrar to make certain political arguments differently so that their respective positions as progressive candidates for the Union parliament would not clash.

Box 10 is composed of four files. The first is a visitor's book from Farrar's home during the South African War, which includes the signatures of major figures in South African society, including Cecil Rhodes and Alfred Milner, providing a glimpse into who Farrar associated with. The second file contains letters on social topics written to Farrar and Ella Farrar by acquaintances, including Jan Smuts and Alfred Milner, providing indications of the relationship Farrar had with various of the South African political elite. The file also contains an undated press cutting about an 'Eastern Counties Dinner' attended by Farrar, interesting in terms of his social world, as well as correspondence about the lease of a British property, Chicheley (1913), and the last wishes of Helen Farrar (1919). Box 11 contains a draft version of a previously mentioned typescript

regarding a trip to Victoria Falls, also the final typescript and the photographs taken by Frank Rhodes.

Box 13 contains three files, the first of which contains two files of mounted newspaper cuttings concerning Farrar's death and funeral, with the second file containing many duplicates of these. The third file contains documents relating to the death, grave and funeral of Farrar. Box 14 contains photographs of Farrar's funeral. Box 15 is composed of two files. The first is an inventory of furniture and effects in Farrar's residence, and reflects something of his lifestyle and status. The second file contains a number of tributes to Farrar, including from J.J. Sullivan, Percy Fitzpatrick and Edgar Walton, to Ella Farrar expressing the sorrow of Unionist members of the South African Assembly and Senate at his death, reflecting a moment which expressed the formal relationships Farrar had with others.

Box 16 contains 3 files, each containing a notebook. These were compiled by Bertie Bennion at the instigation of Farrar's mother Helen. Each covers particular themes, such as home life, politics, personal incidents and so on, with Bennion describing Farrar and using documents and extracts to make flattering points about him. Bennion's task was to construct a positive picture of Farrar and his life, which he did. The documents Bennion used for this are now in the first file of three in Box 17. These include a 1903 letter from Joseph Chamberlain discussing the use of Italian labour, a 1909 speech by Farrar in parliament regarding the allocation of money to the different provinces of South Africa after Union, and a 1911 letter from Milner discussing Farrar's decision to retire from Parliament. The letter from Chamberlain has interesting intertextual references, indicating that Farrar and Chamberlain shared many acquaintances and perhaps had some face-to-face meetings. The letter from Milner concerns his expressed disappointment about Farrar quitting politics, which may indicate a closer political tie between them.

The second file here features a guest-list for a 1912 dinner held to welcome Arthur Lawley back to the Transvaal, at which Farrar made a speech stating his and other people's loyalty to Milner. It is followed by a letter from Milner thanking Farrar for the speech and stating his continued interest in South Africa. These provide further indications of a figurational connection. The file also contains an extract from Farrar's letter to a friend, Bishop Carter, regarding British migrants in Rhodesia, and a letter to Solomon Joel expressing Farrar's disappointment that his request for financial assistance for the Progressive election campaign was refused. The third file includes an extract from a book discussing Farrar's involvement in the 1908-9 National Convention which proposed the Union of South Africa, a 1914 letter from Farrar wanting two ERPM employees to be sent to assist him in German South West Africa, and an extract from the *Kingdom* (magazine), paying tribute to Farrar after his death.

Box 18 is composed of three files, containing photographs of the Farrars, also one of Cecil Rhodes. The final box, number 21, contains three files of newspaper cuttings, mainly from South African papers, most concerning members of the Farrar family and Benoni, the township founded by Farrar. The majority date from 1939 to 1982 and were collected by Helen Turner, the eldest of Farrar's six daughters and the only one to remain in South Africa. These include a volume of press cuttings relating to the death of Ella Farrar, a letter from the Fly Fisher's Club thanking Helen Turner for Farrar's fishing rod, and a letter from D. Humphriss to Helen Turner in 1954 about his newspaper article on Farrar and its use of literary tricks to give a good impression.

From this second sampling strategy, I concluded that, while there are relatively few letters, these and some of the other items are of analytical interest. The topics and themes they concern include the life of Randlords as evidenced by the treatment of Farrar and others in prison, by his furniture and effects and social connections, also regarding Farrar's views on labour and race, his ideas about the relationship between 'race' groups, his relationship with other Randlords, and also with Kitchener, Milner and Chamberlain. This exercise also provided further indication of how the collection came to be shaped as it is. Clearly some of the topics here are important, interconnect, and relate fairly closely to a number of the key aspects of the Randlords as a figuration.

In addition, once the points of analytical interest arising from both the above sampling methods are combined, there are other points of relevance to my research interests. The first concerns habitus, with signs of this indicated by materials regarding the lifestyle of Farrar among the elite, and his world-views and ideas, in particular concerning labour, race and South Africa. Second, Farrar's relationship with broader events, importantly including the Chinese labour question and the miner strikes of 1913, raise the political as well as economic dimensions of Randlordism. Third, the groupings into which Farrar was interwoven are shown to be important, and while this shades into habitus, it is also more than this and raises the figural aspects more visibly. My next method of sampling was carried out to develop depth in the context of the breadth now established, so as to pursue these focal points.

FOCUSING ON LETTERS: SAMPLING TECHNIQUE THREE

The cornerstone of my research is understanding the social, political, business and other connections that the Randlords had and the relationship of this figural aspect, and of them as individuals, to social change. These interconnections are the basis on which habitus forms, the established and outsiders relate, ratios of power shift, action does or does not occur, and figuration and sociogenesis are intertwined. As noted earlier, the most suitable data for analysing relationships over time is provided by letters. The epistolary form includes the telegrams, brief notes, extracts from letters, unsigned parts of letters, typed and draft letters, dictations, letters quoted in narratives, as well as 'letters proper', that are in the Farrar collection, all of which have

letter-like characteristics (Stanley, 2011). In this broad sense, there are hundreds in the collection. If ‘letter’ is defined more narrowly to only include direct communications between two individuals, then the collection contains 98 letters (see Appendix 1). The earliest is dated 1896, the latest 1959. Of those involving Farrar himself, there are 59, written between 1900 and 1914. The others written after his death fall into two groups. The first are tributes and condolences in 1915, the other is formed by letters between 1939 and 1959 regarding the Papers of George Farrar. The 59 extant letters by Farrar cluster in two years, 1907 and 1913. The ten letters dated 1907 are largely concerned with the Cullinan diamond question, while the 1913 spike of eighteen letters is composed by fifteen family letters, and three regarding an attempt on Farrar’s life during the 1913 miners strike.

TABLE 1: LETTERS OF GEORGE FARRAR (1900-1914)

Name	Sent	Received	Total
Family			
Percy Farrar	0	1	1
Ella Farrar	7	0	7
Muriel Farrar	12	0	12
Helen Farrar	1	0	1
Total	20	1	21
Other Associates			
Arthur Lawley	0	1	1
Bishop William Carter	1	2	3
Donald Currie	0	2	2
D. Elliott	0	1	1
Doctor Russell	0	1	1
Geoffrey Robinson	1	1	2
Henry Adler	1	1	2
Herbert Kitchener	0	1	1
Howard Maree	0	1	1
Hubert Hamilton	0	2	2
Jan Smuts	0	1	1
Joseph Chamberlain	0	2	2
L. Harcourt	0	2	2
Leander Starr Jameson	0	1	1
Alfred Milner	1	3	4
Lord Selborne (William Palmer)	1	2	3
M.J. De Jager	0	1	1
P.J. Snyman	1	1	2
R. Goldmann	0	1	1
Raymond Schumacher	1	1	2
Richard Solomon	0	1	1
Solomon Joel	1	0	1
William Fuller Lance	0	1	1
Total	8	30	38
Grand Total	28	31	59

In terms of who Farrar was corresponding with, shown in Table 1, almost a third are to family, the majority to his daughter Muriel, while others are between one and three letters each to a range of people. The majority of the family letters were written *by* Farrar, which may indicate that his family preserved these letters, while the majority of other letters were addressed *to* him and are likely to have been in his personal papers. Of non-family letters, the largest number are between

Farrar and Alfred Milner (4), followed by Lord Selbourne and Bishop Carter (3), followed by Donald Currie, Geoffrey Robinson, Henry Adler, Hubert Hamilton, Joseph Chamberlain, L. Harcourt, PJ Snyman and Raymond Schumacher (2 each).

From these three sampling methods, I now have an analytical basis for selecting letters and other archival documents for further exploration and can identify specific items for close analysis. The analytical themes that have become apparent at this stage as most important concerning my research concerns have developed from earlier and are: the Cullinan diamond question, figurational aspects of the Milner and Farrar exchanges, the positions expressed in Farrar's speeches, the Abe Bailey newspaper attack, the presence of Frank Rhodes, and relational matters in Farrar's letters to his daughter Muriel.

PROCEEDING TO FOCUS

The Gift: The Cullinan Diamond: On 9 November 1907 the so-called Cullinan diamond was presented to King Edward VII on his birthday. A relatively trivial event in the greater scheme of things, this has been interpreted as a symbolic expression of the conciliation policy which the Transvaal Boer leaders Botha and Smuts embarked upon after the South African War ended. The Transvaal Progressive Association was established in November 1904 under the leadership of Farrar and Percy Fitzpatrick, dedicated to ensuring that, following Britain's victory, white English-speakers – associated particularly with the Progressives in politics – would assume political control of the annexed Transvaal Colony (Guest, 2007: 113). This was shortly after the victory of the Progressives in the 1904 Cape election, when Jameson was appointed Prime Minister and Abe Bailey became party whip (Murray, 2008: 383).²⁵ The Transvaal Progressives also established branches throughout the Witwatersrand and in Pretoria, but because its leading members were either mining capitalists or associated with the mining industry, they were labelled as the 'capitalist party' by political opponents.

In August 1907, Botha received support for a Legislative Assembly motion to acquire the rights to the Cullinan Diamond. When the Progressives subsequently opposed the suggestion, Botha appealed to Selborne to influence Farrar so that the gift would be unanimous. Selborne, at the time the British High Commissioner and Governor of the Transvaal, did so (Guest, 2007: 115). But Farrar continued to oppose the proposal, because of the financial position of the Transvaal. The Farrar Papers contains nine letters concerned directly with the Cullinan Diamond issue, all written during the parliamentary debates between 12 and 22 August 1907. Three are between Farrar and Selborne regarding the attempt to persuade Farrar to agree, two between Farrar and

²⁵ Milner retired from office in South Africa in April 1905. He had been working for a system of representative government that was a half-way house between crown colony administration and self-government (Denoon, 1973). The Progressives were pushing for a similar form of governance.

Henry Adler, three between Farrar and Bishop William Carter, and a single letter from Farrar to Robinson (J.B.?).²⁶ The only other document directly relating to the Cullinan diamond issue is a newspaper clipping regarding financing its purchase.

However, this matter did not occur in isolation, with the Chinese labour question engaging Farrar along with miners strikes in 1907, a financial depression and a political election. Looking to this wider context helps explain Farrar's position regarding the Cullinan diamond, with a highly consequential speech by him in January 1907 on Chinese labour, followed by his speeches on land settlement and native policy, with the strikes affecting a number of Farrar's mines, as well as an exchange between Farrar and Milner. Farrar's position within the Progressives, concerning the 1907 miners strikes, and his worries about the public response to the issue of the diamond, overlaid each other. A correspondence with Milner also figured in 1907 around the election.

The Milner Letters: The collection contains four items concerning Farrar's connection with Alfred Milner. One is a letter from Milner to Farrar regarding social topics, the second is a letter to Farrar from Milner on 22 February 1907 concerning *Het Volk's* victory in the February 1907 Transvaal elections and the defeat of the Progressives. Farrar was elected for Boksburg East, but as leader of the Progressives lost the broader election. The third is a letter dated 15 December 1911 from Milner, strongly stating his disappointment in Farrar's decision to retire from politics. The fourth concerns a resolution passed at a dinner hosted by Farrar for Arthur Lawley in 1912, at which it was resolved "that all present desire to tender to Lord Milner their cordial greetings, and to assure him of their continued regard and of their grateful memory of the services he has rendered to South Africa", and this is discussed in detail later.

These items are interesting in themselves, in relation to other items in the collection, as well as by reference to the secondary literature. The letters indicate that Farrar and Milner had a close social and probably also political bond which, based on these letters, existed for at least five years. However, their link stretches back further, as Milner appointed Farrar as a representative on the Transvaal Legislative Council in 1903 and they may possibly have met during the South African War. This relationship is, however, most interesting regarding how the documents show there was a broader group of individuals who shared similar ideas and goals, a figuration, with Farrar's Lawley dinner speech indicating this.

Public Speeches: The collection contains copies of seven public speeches by Farrar. The first, in March 1903, was given just a week after the Bloemfontein Conference, arranged by Milner to discuss issues in the post-South African War context. Farrar was a delegate for the Transvaal, appointed by Milner, and had submitted a resolution supporting the importation of Chinese

²⁶ There are additional letters between Farrar and Selborne in Selborne's papers in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. As this chapter focuses on 'working a collection' around the Farrar Papers, they are not discussed here, although cross-collection is important and I pursue it later regarding Farrar's connections with Milner (Bright, 2013).

labour, which was accepted. Farrar's speech discussed resolutions passed at the conference, with the main focus being his support for this.

The second speech was on 28 December 1903 in the Transvaal Legislative Council, the appointed interim governing body weighted heavily with mining interests (Grant, 2014: 88). It concerned an ordinance designed to protect the interests of European miners and traders by stipulating and limiting the types of work that Chinese workers could do.

The third speech was on 17 January 1907. It is concerned with land settlement, more specifically a state-aided Small Settlers Scheme. This aimed to assist a hoped-for mass migration of British settlers to South Africa, something which Farrar argues in favour of.

The fourth speech was given on 24 January 1907 in Benoni, largely owned by Farrar. Farrar was contesting the Boksburg East seat as leader of the Progressive Party. The Progressive Party's leading members were either mining capitalists or associated with the mining industry. Its avowed objective of a British South Africa also meant that, in contrast to Het Volk's conciliatory policy, it was seen as perpetuating Anglo-Boer hostility (Guest, 2007: 113). His speech discusses Chinese labour, his opponent Sir Richard Solomon, education, Het Volk policy, and the claim that the Progressive Party represented capitalist interests.

The fifth item is a short speech delivered in 1907, exactly when is unknown. In this Farrar argues that the British government should not interfere with South African politics and calls for a unified native policy across its then four composing states.

The sixth speech, noted earlier, was delivered by Farrar at a dinner on 20 March 1912, to honour Captain Sir Arthur Lawley, former Lieutenant-Governor of the Transvaal and Governor of Madras, and "accord to him a hearty welcome on the occasion of his revisiting the Transvaal".²⁷ Farrar and Lawley both made speeches. However, while they praised each other, much of the focus was on Milner and their feelings of loyalty toward him.

The final speech was delivered by Farrar at an ERPM meeting in February 1912. It discusses miner output and safety and is more specific and focused than the others.

Together, these speeches provide interesting insights into Farrar's views on a range of interconnected issues and the rationale he saw underpinning his actions. They are not just about politicking and party politics, but also provide some evidence concerning Farrar's worldview, his vision for South Africa, his assumptions concerning categories of people, and how they and his own perceived group fitted within the wider picture. My attention, consequently, was caught by the way in which they hinted at the figuration/s into which he was interwoven. In particular, I was

²⁷ Mss. Afr. S. 2175. 17/2. F5-12.

intrigued by the March 1912 Lawley dinner speech, its references to Milner, and the hints about figuration it contains.

The Abe Bailey Attack: In the *Standard* of 2 May 1907, an article concerning an anonymous letter to the Editor of the *Morning Post* regarding an attack upon Farrar by Abe Bailey in an earlier issue was discussed, defending Farrar. Abe Bailey was undoubtedly a Randlord, as head of the Bailey Group of gold mines, as well as having vast financial interests in Rhodesia. Farrar and Bailey shared many political and social similarities. Both were involved in the Jameson Raid, both were staunch Empire loyalists, and both were key members of the Progressive Party (Bailey as chief whip). Yet, Bailey's article had publicly attacked Farrar, indicating fissures in what would otherwise appear to be a compact social entity. Farrar cared about this sufficiently to keep the article in defence. In understanding the relationship the Randlords had with one another, such discordant cases are important.

Muriel Farrar Letters: There are twelve letters from Farrar to his daughter Muriel, written between March 1912 and May 1913. Muriel was Farrar's second daughter (1896-1968), later marrying Anthony Edward Lowther, from an aristocratic family. These letters provide insights into the lives and lifestyles of the Farrars, their manner of living and activities as well as the type of people Farrar wanted his daughters to know. They also show the kind of social relationships the Farrars had with other individuals and families, including the Gladstones (a prominent British political family) and the Neumanns (the family of a prominent Randlord). This is an important aspect of both figurations and a key attribute of Randlordism.

In the Background – Frank Rhodes: Scattered through Farrar's papers are indications of a close relationship with Frank Rhodes, the older brother of Cecil Rhodes, who served briefly as an early administrator of Mashonaland (Rhodesia, now northern Zimbabwe) and an appointed member of the Council that formed the government of Matabeleland (Western Rhodesia) under Leander Starr Jameson. He was also, perhaps more importantly, a long-serving secretary of Goldfields Consolidated. Mentions of Frank Rhodes begin with him being involved in the Reform Committee during the Jameson Raid, with Farrar also a member, and he also served on the Board of Directors of a mine with Farrar. Frank Rhodes's name then appears in the visitor's book at Farrar's home, Bedford Farm, during the South African War (1899-1902). Later, as already commented, he participated in a trip with Farrar and his wife in 1903 to Victoria Falls, with many photographs of this taken by him.

DRAWING BREATH

At this point, I want to draw breath and take brief stock of what has resulted so far from my discussion of the details in operationalizing my methodological strategies. Some key ideas from my Eliasian framework have guided me throughout. By putting them to work in relation to the

Farrar collection, I have identified how ‘the collection’ is configured, what is included and what over time has been excluded from it, and therefore in research terms I now have good working knowledge of what can and cannot be done with its present-day contents. I have also identified a number of focal points.

The methodological process engaged in has not only had a logic, but also a momentum in the sense that operationalizing it led me to use investigative strategies to gain breadth of knowledge and then depth of knowledge. What has resulted is a good working knowledge of the collection, and also the relationship of its contents to wider sources of information about the Randlords in figurational terms. This is in part the secondary literature, but also comes from realising how the contents of the Farrar Papers connect with those of some other collections. Using the framework in methodological practice enables me to identify key focal points with regards to materials in the Farrar collection, discussed above.

Pursuing the details of these in documents in the collection has provided a window into, firstly, aspects of habitus and world-view; secondly, links with broader events and especially labour matters in relation to mining; with these in turn, thirdly, bringing to attention the figuration/s of which Farrar was a part and how this was articulated. In particular, my interest became engaged by the connection shown between Farrar and Milner.

FIFTH STEP: BEGINNING ANALYSIS, ATTENDING TO THE SOURCES

At this point, with attention directed to a number of interconnected focal points and some particular documents, the question arises of, how to develop my analytical focus and interpretation? Attending in detail to these documentary sources is key. Documentary research is not ‘a method’, and using documents does not say anything about *how* they will be used (Platt, 1981). The ‘how’ of their use is likely to differ from project to project, and so it is necessary to discuss how documents will be used and understood in this research and its Eliasian framework. The documentary approach spans many methods and fields of inquiry, so only those aspects particularly relevant to this work will be discussed.

John Scott’s (1990) *A Matter of Record* was one of the first detailed sociology texts on the analysis of documents and is still much referenced. Its central premise is that the methodological issues involved in handling documentary sources are similar to those that arise in more positivist and researcher-derived sources of evidence (Scott, 1990: 2). While Scott does acknowledge the ‘meaningful’ character of social reality, he argues that, as the foundation of scientific research rests upon the quality of the evidence available, what is needed are robust criteria to assess the quality of documentary evidence. These criteria concern authenticity (is the evidence genuine and

of unquestionable origin?), credibility (is the evidence free from error and distortion?), representativeness (is the evidence typical of its kind?), and meaning (is the evidence clear and comprehensible?) (Scott, 1990: 43).

Once these have been established, the underlying selective point of view from which the account is constructed should be focused on, with the conditions under which the document was produced, and a judgement reached on the meaning and significance of the text as a whole. Notably, however, while Scott wants to interpret documents from a positivistic perspective, he also acknowledges that interpretation is always a provisional matter. This is a cautionary tale from which I conclude that struggles with meaning are inevitable, and that I can approach them in ways that are consonant with my Eliasian stance, rather than a more 'scientific' stance.

The central argument of Prior's (2003) *Using Documents in Social Research* is that documents form a 'field' of research in their own right and are not just props to human action, seeing the meaning of documents as instead existing in the webs of activities and actor-networks surrounding them, lying largely outside a document's boundaries but shaping its meaning. Documents for Prior are social products, constructed in accordance with rules, and their presence in the world depending on collective, organized action. The idea of the author as the sole creator is diluted, as texts are viewed as written with an audience in mind, and an author does not invent ideas and understandings of the world independently but within particular socially and historically bounded discourses. Documents, then, make discourses and identities visible. Prior further argues that documents act 'at a distance' as agents in their own right in particular fields of action. They can form, maintain and cement social and economic relationships, and importantly can be used to support patterns of social exchange and thereby the social networks that lay behind them. Accordingly, it is the position a document holds in a network or web of activity that contains the key to its use and meaning.

Prior does not ignore the content of documents, arguing that while 'inner' meaning may not be accessible, schemes of referencing are and should form the focus. This involves how what is written is arranged and the discourse and underlying rules and principles that bind its discursive statements together.

Overall, then, Prior side-steps the problem of deriving meaning from documents by placing meaning in the 'outside world' and by moving away from meaning to actor-networks, schemes of referencing and discourse. This is a shift from viewing documents and meaning as accessible through a document, to seeing meaning as residing almost entirely in broader discourses. Understanding of these and what is being referenced and how, the specific context in which documents were produced, the relationship of audiences, and the purpose of a document, becomes the task and approach.

What I take from this is that it is essential to relate documents to context and to discern their meaning as articulated within and having import in a particular context. At the same time, I continue to think it is also important to recognise the agentic properties of documents. By this I mean that the details of what is inscribed within a document are in themselves important, and are not irrelevant to how people make meaning from it. At the same time as recognising the importance of context, then, there are the ‘words on the page’, and these should not be ignored or their specific content dissolved into the generalities of discourse, a loose and all-encompassing term that can be used to deny the importance of the actual words themselves. It also needs to be kept in mind that documents are not actually ‘actors’ in the same way that people are. Certainly documents can be persuasive, and have purposive aspects, but this is because they are made so by social actors and are not inherent in the properties of documents themselves.

Context, the production of meaning as part of context, the active text and the importance of the words on the page, are all important to understanding documents and thus the kind of analysis I want to carry out. In addition, I want to situate what I do within the framework of an Eliasian frame via a focus on ‘documents of life’, everyday documents which are among the remaining traces of the past and are not researcher-designed. The way of thinking about documentary sources combines attention to context, to social actors, and to texts, and is considered next.

Plummer (1983, 2001) argues for a ‘documents of life’ approach that rejects positivism and the search for generalizable laws, instead taking a broad social constructionist position. Ideas influencing this approach emphasise a plurality of perspectives, the need for localised contextual studies, and an emphasis on change and openness rather than order and continuity. It emphasises concrete agentic human beings, social construction and the messiness of life. This is in turn linked to a critical humanist stance which recognizes human subjectivity and creativity, showing how people respond to social constraints and actively assemble social worlds. At its basis is an epistemology of pragmatic empiricism which takes seriously the idea that knowing – always limited and partial – is necessarily grounded in experience.

Plummer indicates that the classic problems of ‘representativeness, validity and reliability’ (which preoccupy Scott) are not those of documents of life work. Instead, he sees analysis and interpretation as a process, breaking his method up rather simplistically into getting the data (coding, editing, indexing, and filing), managing the data, and writing up the research. Plummer does not suggest a systematic method or methods for the analysis of documents, and regarding interpretation, he proposes that there are basically four approaches on a spectrum, from leaving participant voices unedited for the reader to ponder, to framing documents of life with a researcher interpretation, to placing interpretation in a commentary at the end of the document, to letting subjects ‘speak for themselves’ (Plummer, 2001: 178).

For Plummer, analysis is the extent to which the sociologist progressively imposes his or her interpretations upon the understandings of subjects. In summary, while Plummer rejects Scott's approach and views interpretation as fundamental to documentary analysis, he does not provide an explicit method for the analysis of documents, and interpretation is viewed as little more than a set of broad positions concerning how interpretation is situated in relation to documents.

Stanley's (2013a) editorial approach in *Documents of Life Revisited* builds on Plummer's work in extending some and challenging others of his ideas. Documents of life research is situated as part of narrative and biographical inquiry, proposing that, while there is no set method or approach, there are a number of guiding principles and an ethical stance which encapsulates its stance. This starts by drawing on C.W. Mills's maxim that an adequate research approach needs to recognise the symbiotic relationship between history, biography and social structure, with the result that neither structure nor agency takes precedence. People are consequently understood to be agentic within constraints, to be relational yet not cultural dopes, to actively engage in interpretation of the social world, yet not choosing the circumstances in which they do so. The acknowledgment of agentic, reflexive subjects relatedly brings into question the knowledge-claims made by researchers, requiring them to reflect on the role they played in the construction of these.

Documents of life are viewed as a particular kind of data: everyday and 'found' rather than researcher-designed, representational in character and significant in organising and shaping social lives. Such documents should be seen as produced for purposes and are accounts, rather than embodying facts in any simple referential way. This approach also proposes that the analysis of documents of life requires a researcher to focus on the view or perspective expressed through documents, the purpose for which documents were produced, the meaning and affect expressed through them, the relationships textually inscribed between people, how intersubjective world-views are represented, and the details of how the researcher's analysis and interpretational claims are substantiated.

In associated work, Dampier (2008) discusses analysing documents in a documents of life perspective around 're-reading', or reading in "an analytical way against the grain of how its writer has structured and intend a letter or other document to be read and interpreted". For Stanley (2015), in achieving a re-reading it is helpful to focus on the context, pre-text, the text and its meta-data, post-text, and the new context that subsequently arises. These ideas are picked up later.

Ann Stoler's (2009) *Along the Archival Grain*, positioned within the 'archival turn' literature, challenges conventional ideas about the grand narratives of colonialism, rejects that there was a single grand narrative, and also the assumption that reason and rationality lie at the heart of colonial regimes. The resulting stance of scholars she states has been to read documentary sources

‘against the grain’ and in doing so assume a near singular rationality to colonial practices. This has been reinforced by entering archives with preconceived ideas which have led researchers to cherry pick information and specific documents in a way that supports existing narratives of colonialism.

Stoler’s commitment is instead to approach archives and documents by reading ‘along the grain’. Thus she makes a methodological shift from treating archive research as an extractive exercise governed by preconceptions to a more ethnographic approach. Colonial archives and their documents are for Stoler sites of contested knowledge, rumours turned into facts, featuring shifting notions of governance and order, future imaginings and sentiment. Reading against the grain involves reading documents without preconceived ideas guiding the researcher’s selections and interpretations. It looks to the micro worlds, non-histories and events which are viewed as beyond the interests of grand history, in order to see the inconsistency, unstable and piecemeal categories at play, including the emotional and affective life – or the ‘interiorities’ – of documents and the connections to questions of knowledge. Consequently, Stoler provides an approach to the analysis of documents which takes seriously ‘surface’ in a similar way to Stanley’s ideas, but does not spell out a particular method or stratagem.

Stoler’s emphasis on micro-worlds and representational matters being important in reading documentary sources in archive collections is helpful, while her ideas about reading ‘along the grain’ usefully combine surface reading with an emphasis on context as well as the ‘internal’ micro-worlds of texts. Stanley’s framework of discussion is broadly, but at remove, an Eliasian one, while Stoler’s has no point of connection with Elias’s ideas; and so, before putting these ideas into methodological practice, I want to discuss some work which uses Eliasian ideas directly in analysing documents.

The editorial position of Hughes and Goodwin (2014) in their multi-volume *Documentary and Archival Research* takes a stance informed by Elias’s figurational approach. They view documents as simultaneously intrinsic to, and referents of, social processes. In this, people are viewed as open pluralities of bonded and interdependent individuals (in Elias’s terms *homo aperti* as opposed to *homo clausus*, as noted in Chapter 2). Auto/biographical and epistolary documents cannot be understood as representations of a single self, but as part of networks of interwoven biographies. They are historically and spatially constituted and provide insight into group identity and behaviours, and are part and parcel of a broader set of interdependency chains. For Hughes and Goodwin, both the form and the content of documents can yield insights into a broader social and sociological landscape, by asking questions that provide ‘relational clues’ regarding this wider nexus of social relationships. These include sociogenetic questions (how did ‘this’ come to be?), relational questions (in what ways are ‘these’ inter-related?) and also *homines aperti* questions (what broader chains of interdependence are involved in ‘this’?).

Briefly, I want now to piece together the threads of discussion in this section of the chapter. It is clear that matters of representation and validity with regard to documentary sources are important, but these are not the be-all and end-all of analytical considerations, and pinning down and interpreting meaning is always a provisional matter. Certainly recognising the importance of the broader context needs to be kept in mind and the complexities of the relationship between the text and context explored. At the same time, documents have agentic properties, they can have effects, if not usually in their own right then certainly as they are used and invoked by the people who are their producers and consumers acting as social agents in connected ways with each other.

Among different kinds of documentary sources, those that are termed ‘documents of life’ have strong representational features (that is, they are an inscribed reality with a complicated relationship to the world of events). Also they are documents made at the time, and in however complicated a way they represent aspects of the time, place and persons of their making. ‘The author’ as the sole source of documentation has been unsettled, but at the same time it has to be reckoned with that the text is an active one, which has been inscribed in particular ways to produce particular facts, and while the actual effects may be rather different from intended, there are still effects.

In considering these complicated matters, it is helpful to separate out the distinctions that Stanley (2015) makes, and to consider the interconnections between context, pre-text, text and intertexts, post-text and subsequent context. In addition, recognising that the researcher too has a reader-position in relation to the analysis of texts, not just the original readers of them, it is important to pick out the main methodological aspects of this. The general approach I have adopted is what Dampier (2008) refers to as re-reading, and it is the common way of reading documentary sources in the South African context. It problematizes a text, and in a sense looks at it with an ironical or scrutinising eye. That is, it reads ‘against the grain’ of the words on the page. Stanley (2015, 2016) contrasts this with what is termed ‘surface reading’, that is, paying close analytical attention to the words on the page and their overall import, an approach which has a considerable amount in common with Stoler’s (2009) ideas about reading ‘along the grain’. At basis, then, the reader-position developed here is one of ‘surface reading’, attending to the articulation of the text, but also taking into account these other reading-positions as well, and also paying attention to matters of context. Surface reading seeks to describe those aspects of text that are explicit, the obvious or intended meaning of texts (see Best and Marcus, 2009). In other words, surface reading is about reading with the grain, describing and understanding what a writer intends by a document. Also, in piecing these different methodological aspects together, the figurational questions spelled out by Hughes and Goodwin (2014) are helpful in keeping in mind the Eliasian character of the analysis being provided.

Now I turn to showing how in practice I see these different aspects of documentary analysis fitting together within the framework of a figurational and Eliasian account of the 1907 Lawley dinner and the report of speeches made at it. In doing so, I organise my analytical account around Stanley's framework noted above.

THE LAWLEY DINNER DOCUMENT ANALYSED

CONTEXT

I will not go into close detail about the particular context in which this document, provided in full in Appendix 2, see also Appendices 3 and 4, came about, although some key points are helpful. History is of course composed of many intertwining threads, and relevant overviews of this time-period include Arthur Keppel-Jones's (1983) *Rhodes and Rhodesia*, Galbraith's (1974) *Crown and Charter*, and Terence Ranger's (1967) *Revolt in Southern Rhodesia* and (2010) *Bulawayo Burning*, in the broader context of Rhodes, Rhodesia, the British South Africa Company and relevant events in South Africa generally.

Three important events underpinned Farrar's 1907 speech. These were the granting of self-government to the Orange Free State and the Transvaal in 1906, the Progressives losing the 1906 election in the Transvaal, and the Union of South Africa in 1910 but with its antecedents starting in 1907. The South African War (1899-1902) had led – as intended – to the Transvaal (with its goldfields) and the Orange Free State coming under the rubric of imperial control. The apparatus of governance in South Africa, nominally stemming from the High Commissioner and licensed by the British government but actually run locally, had spent much of the period from 1902 to the 1906 elections building administrative structures and developing the four colonies along the lines of colonial interests. The first was the loss of Progressive political control of the Transvaal in the 1907 elections, when Het Volk (under Louis Botha) won the election, followed by Nationalist control of South Africa after Union in 1910 when Louis Botha, as leader of the South African National Party, won with a slight majority with Imperial approval and the goal of conciliation between Briton and Boers (Davenport, 1978: 173). These events are the backcloth to much of Farrar's and Lawley's reported comments.

The central figures in this document are Arthur Lawley, Farrar and Alfred Milner. Lawley's first entry into South Africa was in March 1896, when he accepted the post of Secretary to Albert Grey. Grey, in turn, was on the Board of the British South Africa Company (BSAC), the Chartered Company which was in many ways the corporate extension of Rhodes (Galbraith, 1974). The BSAC had then-recently expanded into South Central Africa in search of a 'second Rand' (Phimister, 1975: 76), though Rhodes also hoped that the BSAC would promote colonisation and economic expansion there for whites. Grey had been earlier appointed as a BSAC board member

as it was thought he would represent public interests and impress parliamentarians (Galbraith, 1974: 113; Rotberg, 1988: 272). He then became Administrator of Southern Rhodesia 1895-1896. Lawley arrived in Rhodesia during the conclusion of the second Matabele War and became Administrator of Matabeleland from December 1896 to January 1901, then Deputy Governor in the Transvaal from September 1902 to December 1905.²⁸ He was Governor of Western Australia in a brief intervening period before returning to Africa to serve as Lieutenant-Governor of the Transvaal. Following this, Lawley was appointed Governor of Madras from 1905 to 1912.

Milner first came to South Africa in May 1897 after accepting appointment from Colonial Secretary Chamberlain to become High Commissioner and Governor of the Cape Colony, one of the most challenging imperial missions of the time (Thompson, 2007; Marks and Trapido, 1979: 54; Denoon, 1973). From 1902 to 1905, he relinquished governorship of the Cape to become Governor of the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal (Thompson, 1951/2007), following which he did not play a significant political role again until the First World War (Halpérin, 1952: 154-155).

PRE-TEXT

The immediate pre-text to this document was Lawley's removal as Governor of Madras. In January 1912, Lawley and family left India, and eventually reached the Transvaal, where this dinner occurred, before taking ship for England. Farrar was still Chairman of the ERPM at this point, which by then employed 17,000 people and produced one tenth of the gold on the Witwatersrand. However, in 1911, the affairs of the ERPM had been in the public eye regarding irregularities in its business practice and a sudden reduction in profit in August 1911. Farrar had been accused of underwriting commission, and had spent much of early 1912 dealing with the scandal, travelling to London to ease shareholders' concerns. Farrar was ultimately forced to resign his parliamentary seat to devote time to his duties as managing director of the ERPM.

The dinner occurred on 12 March 1912 at the Carlton Hotel, Johannesburg. The document is composed of two sections. The first is a typed dinner list in alphabetical order, with three entries in a different colour ink, which may indicate that these individuals were added after the initial typing. It lists 58 people (see Appendix 3). The second, composed of nine pages, is a typed report of the evening with a number of corrections made by hand. The paper has a watermark for A. Pirie and Sons, a British paper and envelope manufacturer. The purpose of this document is unstated, it is unsigned, and there is no information about who created it or for what purpose. However, its structure and tone provide hints. It begins with a broad introduction which explains

²⁸ Surprisingly little has been written on Arthur Lawley, which makes it difficult to track his activities and relationships over time, although see Hogg 2007. While containing detail, this does not provide sources for its claims and cannot be relied upon.

the event briefly, followed by Farrar's speech, then Lawley's speech, followed by concluding comments, as if to be consumed by a readership without any prior knowledge of the event. It was likely intended as a press release or for a similar purpose. Who the author was and what his/her relationship was to the event and the individuals at it are unknown. However, the use of 'Sir George' (line 7) does imply that the writer may have been acquainted with Farrar.

TEXT

While all documents involve selection, the most important mechanism shaping the contents of this document was the third party who created it, who wrote it to be taken at face value and does not differentiate between interpretations, descriptions, and supposed verbatim speech. It begins with a summation kind of description (lines 1-8), then describes Farrar's speech as a third person account (lines 8-9), which slips into a first-person account without any textual indication that this had happened (lines 9-40). And of course, it is unknown what was left out due to it being thought uninteresting or irrelevant to the author and his/her purposes and intended audience.

After summarising Farrar's speech, a single sentence in the third person marks the transition to Lawley's speech (line 41). The author then provides what appears to be a verbatim transcription of Lawley's speech (lines 42-139). While Farrar's speech is two and a half pages long, Lawleys' speech is six pages and thus composes the majority of the document. At the end of Lawley's speech, the author then slips back into the third person to describe the toast by Mr. Goch to Milner in the third person (lines 143-144), which then slips into a quotation, presumably of Mr. Goch (lines 145-147).

The document features six different though interdependent actors: Farrar, Lawley, Mr. Goch, the author, the guests, as well as a wider public audience. Each shaped the document in some way, some directly and explicitly (Farrar, Lawley, Goch, the author), and others less directly but still in important ways (the guests and the wider public audience). The document is largely composed of speeches made by Farrar and Lawley and also Goch, and part of each is about the other and their bond, while other parts were written to represent both Lawley's and Farrar's views, and also that of the wider audience, which is indicated through noting cheers and laughter. Lawley and Farrar would have tailored their speeches to the interests and expectations of their audience and, as a result, these factual (what things are), and value (good and bad), claims provide insights into figurational aspects.

The guests are not of random origin: the document states that the majority came from the Rand and Pretoria, and many had been associated with Lawley when he was Lieutenant-Governor of the Transvaal or in Matabeleland (Rhodesia). A brief biographical sketch of these individuals (Appendix 4) brings to the surface a number of shared characteristics: the vast majority were of British decent, were central figures in either the mining industry, or the military or

political/colonial administration positions, or careers which traversed these; had an existing association with Lawley and in the vast majority of cases with Milner as well. Farrar does not seem to have a strong Cecil Rhodes connection, but was associated with many of the people Rhodes associated with. Relatedly, this group of men had close associations with Milner's Kindergarden, the young male Oxford-educated administrators drawn to South Africa during the South African War who served under Milner (Nimocks, 1970; Denoon, 1973). The goal was the reconstruction of the two Boer republics, though more generally to work for Milner's goal of a united South Africa loyal to the British Empire, and the restoration of the power of the group to which they belonged and the strengthening of the Empire (Nimocks, 1970). Despite the failure of this, these men maintained a close bond, those in England meeting frequently on social occasions.

Farrar's speech begins with lines 9 to 23. He mentions that '*they*' would always regard Lawley with affection ... '*they*' were glad to have Lawley in those trouble days. There is as such an understanding of an 'us' here, a feeling or belief that they had worked together towards common goals or hold something in common. This 'us' explicitly refers to the 58 individuals attending the dinner, but this is undoubtedly not the sum of the group. Given the short notice of the dinner, and that those attending were only from Pretoria and the Transvaal, it also refers to a larger grouping not present. However, line 19 provides a clue. Here Farrar mentions Milner without any apparent reason to do so. And also without any reason to do so the audience applauds the mere mention of Milner's name. Farrar then groups Milner and Lawley together, which is very much a compliment to Lawley, who worked under Milner. Probably intended as a newspaper piece, it was likely intended to be read by the broader 'us'.

Farrar then mentions the ten years that Lawley worked in South Africa (lines 12-15), and that on his return Lawley is able to see the result of his work, which was for the '*good*' of South Africa (line 23). Farrar comments between lines 23-26, the "dreams of Cecil Rhodes being realised, had seen progress and prosperity in Matabeleland [and] in the Transvaal he had seen advancement not only on the mines but on the land, the soil, the true/wealth progress. (Applause)". Farrar is using Rhodes's actions as an example of 'good' work. A closer look at these changes as well as Lawley's career provide indications of what progress and prosperity meant to these people. While there was a civilizing process in Rhodesia and the Transvaal in the sense that roads and railways were built, white living conditions improved, settlement increased as well as civil administration, it was very much a bifurcated development: improvement for whites, and a massive de-civilizing processes for black people.

The achievement of progress and civility in Rhodesia required the destruction of the bases of power, self-determination and independence of indigenous black communities in order to take control of the land for white settlement, to create a pool of cheap labour, and to mine wherever companies wanted (Mlambo, 2014: 40-50). Groups of Africans did attempt to dislodge white

occupants in 1896 through a massive uprising in response to settler land grabbing, genocide, taxes, forced labour on the mines, and the disruption of indigenous ways of life (Ranger, 1967; 2010). War continued into 1897, with reinforcements from South Africa and England and a scorched earth policy eventually enabling the administration to end the war. The development of the Transvaal involved the failed Raid, a lengthy and costly provoked war which also led to the use of concentration camps (where almost 30,000 Boer women and children died from epidemics) and the adoption of a scorched earth policy, essentially destroying the basis of rural livelihoods. Lawley's career maps on to these processes, first as Administrator of Matabeleland (Rhodesia), then as the deputy Governor of the Transvaal under Milner, before Governorship of Madras.

Farrar uses Lawley's governorship of Madras as an example of "the greatness of the British Empire", followed by the statement that South Africa would also soon be able to take "big responsibilities" (lines 28-30). He also describes Lawley as an example of a patriotic Englishman, and that Farrar could not "imagine a truer type of the high-minded, courteous, and able Englishmen" (line 33). There are three interwoven statements here. The British Empire and its administrators in relation to the Boers and the indigenous populations of South Africa had been that of the established group. However, by 1907 this began to change rapidly, as indicated earlier. Its local officials had been engaged in actively shaping governmentality, were the leaders in the Imperial army, controlled the major sources of finance, associated with the rich and powerful, and were all men, although by 1907 this was not so.

The closest figuration to what is hinted at here is the much written about Milner's Kindergarden, men who served under Milner in various posts of administration in the colonial civil service. While accounts of its 'membership' vary, those usually cited include Robert Brand, Lionel Curtis, John Dove, Patrick Duncan, Richard Feetham, Lionel Hitchens, Geoffrey Dawson, Philip Kerr, Dougal Malcolm, as well as more peripheral members such as Leo Amery, Herbert Baker, John Buchan, William Marris, James Meston, and Basil Williams. The only borderline Kindergarden member at the Lawley dinner is Herbert Baker, more part of the Rhodes figuration, but who was a friend of many Kindergarden men and in some lists is considered a member (Nimocks, 1970: 46).

The positive characteristics which Farrar applies to Lawley as the archetypal Englishman, "high minded, courteous, and able Englishman", are, as Elias and Scotson (1965/2008) point out, those that are taken from an established group's most exemplary members and generalized to the whole group. It is this sense of superiority that acts as the justification for the activities they engaged in. A final element here is the idea that South Africa needs to take up "big responsibilities" within the British Empire, which Rhodes called the manifold destiny of Southern Africa. However, from an Eliasian perspective, this can be understood as these men feeling themselves to be a part of the British Empire and receive a sense of self-worth from this belonging. If South Africa played an

important part in the British Empire, these men would in turn be important members of a large established group from which they received increased self-worth.

Line 41 marks the transition to Lawley's speech. He begins by referring disparagingly to General Barry Hertzog's politics. Hertzog had won his political campaign for the equal status of Dutch and English in public business and for a bilingual public service (Davenport, 1978: 173-174), with laughter following this reference. Then Lawley refers to the different treatment of those coming from India, here referring to Mahatma Gandhi. In 1906, the Transvaal government had introduced a new Act compelling registration of the Indian population, and during the ensuing seven year struggle against this, many Indians were jailed, beaten, or shot for striking, refusing to register, for burning their registration cards or engaging in other forms of nonviolent resistance. When Lawley states that his reception would have been quite different if he were Indian (line 69), the audience responds with loud laughter.

Lawley continues, alluding to close association between those in Rhodesia and the Transvaal (line 70-74), that many present had worked with him under Milner for what they believed to be the salvation of South Africa, a "contented ... prosperous ... and British South Africa" (line 75-77). In fact, many of those at the dinner would have first worked under Rhodes, followed by working for both Rhodes and Milner, and finally exclusively for Milner after Rhodes's death in March 1902. Interestingly, Lawley here explicitly points out the existence of established and outsider groups and the difference in their treatment in the South African context followed by his closeness of association with the established, not only with regards to employment, but also of social bonds, beliefs and world-view, sharing a similar vision which traversed working relationships. Milner had by this time left South Africa seven years earlier, and the arrival of Lawley had most likely created an opportunity for Farrar to bring this group of men back together.

Lawley then continues, describing the changes in South Africa and Rhodesia (lines 94-105) as 'remarkable', and the result of the policies of their 'gallant chief' Milner, which have not been abandoned. This is an interesting statement, as many of Milner's policies failed (Denoan, 1973). These policies were as already noted largely aimed at assisting white inhabitants and Lawley clearly had seen the development of 'white' South African hand-picked localities. Farrar, for example, took Lawley around Benoni and Boksburg, which were in many ways Farrar's social project, and where the majority of inhabitants were then of British extraction.

After the optimistic tone when discussing the social and economic dimensions of Southern Africa, when discussing the political sphere (beginning line 109), Lawley's tone changes to solemn disappointment. He begins his discussion here, without any apparent reason to do so, by mentioning criticism and unhappiness with the changes that had occurred, followed by the mention of bitterness which, based on his comments (lines 115-117), he assumes was shared by

the ‘us’. These changes involved the inability of this ‘us’ group to control Southern Africa politically, with the already noted sense of political loss because of increasing Afrikaner Nationalism, a former outsider group with different and largely competing interests and visions for South Africa. Lawley then moves on to make a crucial remark:

The pattern of government which has been woven was not exactly what anyone of us, I take it, would have divined it to be; but, after all, it is better – is it not? – to deal with a question of this kind on broad lines and to consider what was the position in South Africa shall we say some twenty years ago in order to compare it with the position of the country to-day.

Expressed in positive terms, Lawley is here pointing out that the vision that his erstwhile established group had for South Africa had not been realised, and its members’ relative power had declined. Their plans to tip the ratios of power in their favour through British immigration, closing ranks, a three year war and the building of a British administration had failed. They had succeeded in uniting South Africa, of ‘civilizing’ the country to some degree in developing it for the white population, but had failed to maintain their positions of power.

Lawley then (lines 128-130) makes reference to the ‘Uitlanders’, the British-origin settlers in the Transvaal prior to the South African War being ruled by a “sixteenth century oligarchy”, a reference to the Boer Government, thereby giving approval for both the South African War and specifically the Jameson Raid before it. Lawley then makes another interventionist comment (Lines 130-134), that all ‘sons of South Africa’, presumptively white, should join purposes and integrate South Africa at a high level into the British Empire.

Once Lawley’s speech is finished, George Goch, without any explicit reason to do so, proposed “the health of Lord Milner” (lines 144-145). This is followed by a message from all those in attendance addressed to Milner, which in essence indicates continuing loyalty to the vision that Milner and this group had once had for South Africa.

POST-TEXT

While post-text reverberations are often difficult or more frequently impossible to pin down, the Farrar collection does offer one piece of relevant evidence, in the form of a letter from Milner to Farrar dated a month after the dinner, which also provides some indication of the bond these two men shared (see Appendix 5). This indicates that Farrar had written to Milner directly after the dinner to inform him about the resolution that was passed. This assured him of their “*continued regard and grateful memory*” of the services Milner had rendered. Milner’s letter responds by pointing to three important dynamics: he has not ‘lost interest’ in South Africa, Farrar knows the reason he cannot speak ‘in public’ (underlined in original text) about it, and his affection for the “old guard who stood by the union jack” remains undiminished. Milner stating that he had not lost interest in South Africa is to point out the joint purpose once shared with this group. It was

only publicly he could not express his views, and he continues that this was also an emotional bond, an affection for what he terms the old guard, associated with those individuals who made the toast; in other words, the dinner guests at the gathering.

It should be remembered that this dinner was to pay tribute to Lawley. Yet, those in attendance shared more than a link with Lawley. The dinner had a powerful undertone, of Farrar bringing a group of men together who had once shared a common purpose of both individual and group interest, involving an emotional and ideological bond linked to the sense of being part of an Empire. To an outside observer, especially today, the dinner as it is reported seems unusual. First, the speeches made seem to discuss achievements and failures of some underlying and shared view or purpose, rather than celebrating Lawley's presence. Its culmination in the resolution and sending a message to Milner indicates a past time when the figuration stood strong and is almost extreme in this harking back. Superficially, this bond was, as Milner states, to the Union Jack, or the British Empire, but it was also much more than this and was personified symbolically by the connection with Milner.

SUCCEEDING CONTEXT

In the years that followed, political power in South Africa remained in the control of Boer/Afrikaner Nationalism until 1994. English-speaking South Africans remained relatively economically prosperous, but did not regain the political and military influence they had prior to Union in 1910. Overtime, the figuration under discussion eventually disappeared due to passing time and deaths. Milner remained out of the spotlight until the First World War, when he was appointed to the British War Cabinet. Farrar, after making a relative comeback by regaining control of the ERPM, was killed accidentally in the First World War when he became Quarter Master General. Lawley remained fairly active until his death in 1932, though his activities had already moved away from South Africa.

The analysis of this document has indicated the existence of a structure of mutually oriented and interdependent persons. It broadly points to an elite figuration as seen from within and has given a glimpse into the psychosocial world of this elite, something usually fenced off from outsiders. This interdependency arose from a shared habitus, the social ideas of a defined group, with a shared sense of who their most esteemed and idealised members were (Milner, before him Rhodes), a shared sense of what the course of South African history should be, and the belief that their ideals alone were fitted for leadership. Indeed, they shared other characteristics too. They all came from the Witwatersrand, were of British descent, were all men, were in the upper echelons of society, and had existing relationships with Lawley and Milner. The beliefs involved were both instrumental and affectual; there was an idealisation and imaginative of their most esteemed members, and the shared knowledge of the fall of their group and of a time now gone.

In understanding Farrar's actions, including his role in the Jameson Raid, in the Chinese labour question, and in the Progressive Party, appreciating the role of the figuration is essential regarding the access this network provided him with. This dinner document and related letters indicates the existence of a cohesive group joined together by shared ideas of who they are, what they should be and what they aimed to achieve. It also provides a tantalising hint of how it was interwoven with others in a broader set of interdependencies whose unfolding has influenced the course of South African history.

The rise of this figuration was the result of, most importantly, the discovery of diamonds and gold, which allowed men such as Rhodes, Farrar and the Randlords overall to rise to positions of power around their business, financial and political connections and supported their role within the local Milnerite Imperial project. The Lawley Dinner document reflects a moment at the end of their influence on South African society and economy. And as this figuration dwindled in power and influence, so too did Farrar's potential and actual influence on wider events.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has developed a methodology together with an analytical and theoretical framework grounded in a set of concrete investigative practices suited to answering the research questions central to my thesis. A methodology is a 'way of seeing', designed to bring certain elements of interest to the surface while bracketing others, and is as such also a way of not seeing. The methodology operationalised here has brought to the surface clues about the broader social and political landscape, including, as Hughes and Goodwin (2014) point out, sociogenetic questions, relational questions, and *homines aperti* questions.

Overall, this methodology has worked well. It takes seriously questions of analysis and interpretation, aspects of documentary research that are often taken for granted, and it successfully assisted in structuring analysis and clarifying the logic lying behind this. In doing so it helped reveal what can and cannot be known about Farrar, these being very much figurational matters (the shape of Farrar's figuration and links to broader social change), and it helpfully narrowed analysis to themes of particular interest. In terms of the main gaps in the literature, it was able to point out the shape of Farrar's figuration within the limits presented by the collection, and also the importance and role of the Milner connection in this, but to a lesser degree the influence he had on broader events. I was not able to establish a *direct* influence regarding this. Rather, the indications were largely secondary and refer to 'events', concerning the Jameson Raid, the Chinese labour question, the Cullinan diamond controversy, the miners strikes, the formation of the ERPM and share scandal.

The Chinese labour question was probably Farrar's area of greatest impact, although this was clearly closely related to his relationship with Milner in giving him access to positions where he might make a difference. There are also indications of the importance of associations on what Farrar could and could not do. Through Milner, Farrar was nominated to several councils with influence, was given wide ranging powers through Kitchener, and succeeded as a mining tycoon through his association with the likes of the Ecksteins. Contentions about the power and the influence of elites certainly abound, but are rarely precise, and my approach provides a beginning to pinning down the 'how', 'what' and 'why' of figurational influence.

The sampling techniques were useful. While they cannot be said to produce a fully representative sample, as archival boxes may contain varying numbers of items, and their content cannot be controlled for, nonetheless they provide a robust method for gaining an idea of the overall shape and content of a collection. This is paradoxically due to the way in which collections have been organized and shaped over time into themes or categories. The results are shaped, 'biased' as a result of the way in which a collection has been moulded by both people and events. Looking outside a collection can partly offset this, in this instance by deepening understandings of relationships and Farrar's relationship to events not adequately covered in the Farrar collection. Looking more widely here could include the Milner papers, the papers of Godfrey Yeatman Lagden, of William Waldegrave Palmer, the Goldfields Consolidated collection, and Farrar's business papers in Boksburg. While the first four are possible, the final one is not, given the continuing existence of the ERPM and the gatekeepers who have an interest in maintaining the privacy of these papers overall. However, this investigation clearly indicated that the papers of the CMIC and the Milner papers in particular would bear fruit regarding figurational connections, and this is pursued in Chapters 4 and 5.

The significance of Milner in my findings are 'real' but also related to the higher number of Milner letters in comparison to other people. Both the content of the letters, and the shape of the collection, in other words, shape the focus of analysis. The existence of letters between Farrar and those listed in Table 1 indicate both relationships, and also potential avenues of further research. In some cases, the significance of relationships can be known if letters still exist, while in other cases it cannot be known. This raises the limits set on figurational research by collections and their contents. A result is the need for a humbler approach to figurational research. To map figurations quantitatively tells little about the significance of these connections, yet to analyse these connections qualitatively requires a rich series of longitudinal data and a huge amount of work to understand the significance of bonds. To understand the significance of a single bond may take months of work, and still only uncover relational clues. Flexibility is also centrally necessary, as the research is at basis at the mercy of what a collection contains.

The chapter following will build on the methodological, substantive and conceptual insights discussed here by exploring the papers of the Central Mining and Investment Corporation (CMIC), with the particular concern being what these can further tell me about Randlords and figurations. The methodology laid out in detail here will remain largely implicit as indicating ‘what I did’, and the emphasis will be more on analysis and interpretation.

CHAPTER 4: EVENTS AND FIGURATIONS

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 3 was concerned with both methodological and substantive matters. Methodologically, it developed and successfully used a number of investigative procedures in keeping with my Eliasian framework. Substantively, it has shown the significance of Farrar's relationships and that the structure of these bound him within interlocking networks of connections. These facilitated the flow of information through the Corner House and other associations (which Bathelt et. al. 2004 call knowledge clusters) and also supported his access to capital and economic opportunities. The most successful Randlords were connected with the Corner House, while Farrar's earlier association was mainly with other clusters such as the Henderson Group, which over time proved to be less effective. Also, a fairly small and highly connected group of men served on the boards of a large number of companies. While I did not map these associations in any detail, their existence indicates that the structure of the connections into which Farrar was interwoven played a defining role in his attainment of a position of economic power.

Yet, there is little indication that Farrar shared values and aspirations which reinforced identity and solidarity with members of this group beyond economic interests. Instead, Farrar's sense of purpose and identity arose from a figuration he associated with by choice. His relationship with Milner was definitional in providing access to positions of influence and thus impacted on his ability to influence broader events. What begins to come into sight is the existence of a group of men whose point of orientation was not the Imperial project as governed from Britain, but rather the figure of Milner and his particular project in the local South African context. The sources explored indicated the existence of a figuration of mutually-oriented individuals, and provided a glimpse into the ideals held by its members and how it was interwoven with other figurations, including that involvement in it provided Farrar with access to positions and people of influence. However, this analysis was able to cut into the Milnerite figuration only at a final point just prior to its end, due to the coverage provided by the source materials being worked with. For this reason, it is not possible thus far to say whether and to what extent Farrar had a significant position in the figuration at an earlier stage, or precisely what his relationship was with Milner (although Chapter 5 will examine in greater detail the architecture of Milner links by focusing on Randlord letters within the Milner Collection).

With these methodological and substantive concerns in mind, thinking about what 'the Randlord' was in Farrar's case shows that he was not just in the right place at the right time but gained access to information which directed his activities. In particular, ingress to the Corner House and its key figures played an extremely important role in Farrar's later ability to take advantage of

opportunities, in terms of knowing such opportunities existed and having the financial resources to take advantage of them. Also, the quality and accuracy of this information was crucial to the success of Farrar as a Randlord, and this arose from networks of connected individuals, something likely to be so for other Randlords too. From earlier glimpses of the Milnerite figuration, it was clear that Farrar's business activities did not directly coincide with who he associated with. There were rather groups whose shared purposes differed. And while they may have overlapped in cases, which groups of individuals he became involved with depended on matters of identity, individual and group interests, and localities.

This chapter builds on these methodological, substantive and conceptual insights by exploring the papers of the Central Mining and Investment Corporation (CMIC), with the focus being what its letters and associated material can further tell me about Randlords and figurations. The Papers of the CMIC are held in the Bodleian Library, Oxford (Mss. Brit. Emp. S. 412). Composed of 84 boxes, the collection includes correspondences, share registers, and reports relating to the activities of the CMIC, as well as other companies, and is subdivided geographically²⁹ and then into regions. This investigation will be pursued by first providing a brief overview of the CMIC, then moving to my substantive investigations, with the detailed methodological practices described in the previous chapter taken for granted and not described in depth.

In particular, I am interested in this chapter in exploring Randlords in relation to 'events'. Sewell (2005) provides a useful framework for thinking about events and how these can be transformative, drawing in part on Sahlins (1991). Sewell points out that a society is composed of "spheres or arenas of social practice of varying scope that intertwine, overlap, and interpenetrate in space and time", adding up to the "conception of structures as multiple, overlapping, and transposable also clarifies the problem of the production of acting subjects ...". (Sewell, 2005: 206, 210-212). This echoes much of what lies at the heart of Elias's concept of the figuration. Sewell (2005: 197-224) also argues that events are in essence transformations of structure, with structure being the cumulative outcome of past events. Yet, events are only recognisable as events within the terms provided by the existing cultural structure. An event is an event only to the degree to which it is interpreted and understood to be such, and the consequences of an event depend on this particular interpretation. In this way, structures define and shape events, and "events (re) define and (re) shape structures" and "... a society's cultural structure is a product of the events through which it has passed" (Sewell, 2005: 199-200).

A good example of how this can be used is Alexander's (2013) analysis of the Marikana massacre, in which 34 striking miners died in the most lethal use of force by South African security forces against civilians since the 1970s. Alexander argues that the Marikana massacre was a turning

²⁹ Africa, Canada, Far East, Middle East, South America, West Indies, United Kingdom and the Pacific.

point in South African history, “a *rupture* that led to a *sequence* of further *occurrences*, notably a massive wave of strikes, which are changing *structures* that shape people’s lives (Alexander, 2013: 605; original emphases). Alexander is interested in changes triggered by the massacre, and the way these might shape the future. Such events bring underlying structures, or deeper frictions and fractures, to the surface and thus render them visible, and he comments that the significance of an event can only be seen in the processes that unfold subsequently and over time. The event is in turn the cumulative outcome of past events and should not be viewed as occurring unexpectedly or outside the flow of history, but rather as sequences of occurrences that are marked by a rupture or break with routine practice. Ultimately, Alexander (2013) proposes that the Marikana event has changed the psychosocial and political landscape in South Africa, in the form of increasing numbers of strikes post-Marikana. It changed the political stance of workers and how they mobilise; anti-government trade unions have become more popular; and it has spurred the development of a radical new party, the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF). Perhaps more importantly, the Marikana massacre violently brought to the surface and to public consciousness deep-rooted relationships of inequality and exploitation.

The understanding of events and how they relate to social change by Alexander and Sewell on the one hand, and by Elias on the other, is similar. Yet, a significant difference concerns the scale of events of interest. Both Alexander and Sewell place their emphasis on dramatic and large-scale events, whereas for Elias the emphasis is much more on the routine, the everyday and cultural, including such things as dress, manners, affect, group memberships, or the layout of dwellings. For Elias, events need not be dramatic and large-scale to have significance, and much historical change takes the form of gradual, almost imperceptible changes. Nor for Elias are such ruptures necessary to gain glimpses of underlying structures and changes. Instead, he emphasises that the most mundane occurrences can have sociological significance in that they reveal underlying long-term structures, relationships and processes, though it is usually dramatic events that provide the focus for academic history. These longer-term structures, or the *longue durée*, are thus highlighted by Elias as equally significant to Sewell’s focus on events and sudden ruptures in the flow of history. Elias’s ideas regarding what constitutes history were influenced by Wallerstein’s (2004) and Braudel’s (1902–1985) ideas of the *longue durée* which downplay the importance of specific events and focus on longer-term processes.

In *Studies on the Germans* (1989/2013), Elias provides examples of such *longue durée* processes, how these can be studied and how these in turn help to explain broader social changes. Focusing on the German experience, Elias aims to explain the rise and growth of Nazism, the Second World War, the Holocaust and the breaking up of Germany after the war, by focusing on micro-structures – changes in European standards of behaviour, duelling and membership of the imperial ruling class and the monopoly of violence. In other words, Elias draws a connection between processes

of state-formation on the ‘macro’ level, changes in the habitus of individuals on the ‘micro’ level, and investigates these micro-structures to make macro structures visible. Elias also makes use of this method in *On the Process of Civilisation* (1939/2012), though a central difference is that *Studies on the Germans* is more about decivilising processes within the overall theory of civilising.

The position most usefully taken is to acknowledge that these two viewpoints, one focusing on the seemingly low-key and mundane and the other on the dramatic and transformational, compose two end-points on a spectrum, and that both can be usefully drawn on as a framework for reviewing the CMIC collection. These ideas will be used in broadly guiding what I have selected for analysis; namely events, whether large or small, and how these in turn can tie in with broader processes of social change. In making selections, I went through my detailed fieldnotes on every document I read. From this I constructed a catalogue which related my notes to the main divisions of the collection. I then went through my field notes and catalogue looking for letters providing instances of events, both large or small, that concerned any of the Randlords. From this, four documents stood out, which will be detailed later.

THE CENTRAL MINING AND INVESTMENT CORPORATION

The Central Mining and Investment Corporation (CMIC) can be traced to Jules Porgés (1839–1921). Porgés was an Austrian-born financier, based in Paris, who came to dominate the diamond and gold mining industry in South Africa. The ascent of a core group of Randlords can be attributed to their association with Porgés and they include Julius Wernher (1850 – 1912), Alfred Beit (1853 – 1906), Hermann Ludwick Eckstein (1847 – 1893), and James Benjamin (J.B.) Taylor (1860 – 1944). Their activities were linked by the corporate structures formed by Porgés, which formed and maintained their social positions and the capital required for their ascent. These activities took the form of constantly developing financial and corporate configurations, with the CMIC drawing these links together.

On the periphery of this core group were a number of other Randlords whose association with it contributed to their success. George Farrar’s (1859–1915) rise was levered directly or indirectly through Porgés, Cecil Rhodes’s (1853–1902) early association with Alfred Beit³⁰ linked him to enormous financial capital, while Abe Bailey (1864–1940) and Lionel Phillips (1855–1936) greatly benefited from their associations with it. Those outside of this were normally either absorbed or defaulted, with Barney (Isaacs) Barnato (1851–1897) a key example, and hundreds of smaller rivals met a similar end.

³⁰ Rhodes allied himself with Alfred Beit, whose financial wizardry and close links with Jules Porgés and Company provided Rhodes with the finance required to monopolise the diamond mines.

Wernher was working as a bookkeeper in a Paris bank when his employer, Porgés, gave him a letter of recommendation to Jules Porgés, who was a diamond merchant heading the wealthiest diamond business in the world at the time of the discovery of diamonds in South Africa. Wernher went with Porgés' partner, Charles Mége, to buy diamonds in South Africa. When Mége returned to Paris in 1873, Wernher became a partner in the firm of Jules Porgés & Co. and its sole representative in Kimberley. By 1876 Wernher had formed a syndicate to purchase claims in the Kimberley mine, and in April 1877 accompanied Porgés to Paris where all the syndicate's claims were put into a private company called the Griqualand West Diamond Mining Company. Wernher was one of the first to see that consolidation – the group – was the solution to increasing managerial complexity and the financial demands of mining. The *Compagnie Française des Mines du Cap* was consequently formed in Paris in 1880, gradually enlarged its holdings in Kimberley, and facilitated Rhodes' ascendancy over the Kimberley diamond fields (Kubicek, 1979: 57).

In 1884 Alfred Beit, who had started as an apprentice to Jules Porgés and Co., became a partner. Having invested on his own account in the De Beers mine, he was brought into close contact with Cecil Rhodes. Rhodes and his associates in De Beers were able to come to negotiate with Wernher and the French Company regarding amalgamating the various Kimberley mines. With the aid of Wernher, in 1887 Rhodes bought the French Company and in so doing forced Barnato to merge his diamond interests in the Kimberley Central Diamond Mining Company. In the meantime, Wernher and Beit had bought large holdings in Du Toit's Pan and elsewhere with the knowledge of Rhodes. Wernher, who returned to London in 1880, created a diamond syndicate there and directed the London office of Jules Porgés & Co. while Porgés operated in Paris.

After Porgés retired in 1889, the firm was reconstituted as Wernher, Beit & Co. of London. The discovery of the Witwatersrand goldfields in 1886 brought the firm into goldmining. Alfred Beit sent J.B. Robinson to the Witwatersrand to buy up large and valuable properties for the syndicate he had formed with Robinson and his partner, Marcus. Meanwhile Porgés had asked Eckstein and J.B. Taylor to open a branch of his firm in Johannesburg. The new company of H. Eckstein – or the Corner House – was established for the purpose of floating companies to develop their properties, and in due course the partners bought out Robinson and Marcus. The Corner House in essence acted as a holding finance company for the mines floated, of which each had its own directors and management, but the firm had control over appointments and major decisions.

The backbone of Porgés' success, in turn, lay in his relationship with extensive networks of bankers and brokers established around the Kimberley diamond discoveries. These contacts provided financial muscle and meant that, unlike the majority of early Rand mines, Porgés and Co. were not dependent upon locally-raised capital and credit from colonial banks, nor did they have to persuade small investors for working capital. In 1888-1889, apart from buying out diggers

and purchasing farms, H. Eckstein and Company along with other financially powerful mining groups such as Barnato's, Rhodes's Gold Fields of South Africa, and J.B. Robinson, embarked upon a process of company and claim amalgamation which led to the emergence of the Group System, a kind of super syndicate.

Following the establishment of the Group System, the Porgès set of interests embarked on centralizing the refining, shipping, insurance and brokerage of gold, both on the Rand and in London. The merchant bank of N. M. Rothschild and Sons acted as financial advisers and bankers to the company in Kimberley and Johannesburg, and Porgès suggested it should work more closely with the Rand mines, and by proxy Wernher and Beit. The relationship between Rothschild and Sons and Wernher, Beit was with respect to equity financing and general mining operations; by the 1890s it extended across the spectrum of metalliferous production to the more detailed issues of the marketing and refining of gold in London (Van Helten, 1982: 542-543).

Both Lord (Nathanial) Rothschild and his Paris cousins at Rothschild Freres had been involved with Cecil Rhodes, J. Porgès and Company and others in the De Beers amalgamation in Kimberley in the 1880s. Both branches of the Rothschild family retained close links with De Beers and Rhodes through the 1890s and thereafter, and their involvement on the Witwatersrand appears to have been largely established in close cooperation with the Corner House. This association with Wernher, Beit and Company was not surprising in view of the latter's weekly sales of gold on the London market via N.M. Rothschild and Sons. During February 1895, for example, Wernher, Beit and Company sold over £32,684 (£3,400,000 today³¹) of bullion via the bank (Van Helten, 1981: 120).

These activities were closely followed by establishment of the CMIC in London in May 1905 with a capital of £6 million (around £5,762,000,000 today), described as the biggest trust of its kind the Rand or even London and Paris had ever seen. The original list of partners and directors included Wernher, Eckstein and Phillips as chairmen. The CMIC was a subsidiary of the private financial house of Wernher, Beit and Company and was an investment company, operating no mines and existing only to funnel investments to established and prospective mining concerns (Jeeves, 1985: 61; Innes, 1984: 120). It was designed not only to shore up a shaky share market, but also to take on the badly-run house of Farrar's East Rand Proprietary Mines, and to make the partnership's gold shares more liquid (Innes, 1984: 120).

³¹ There is no one best indicator of what a monetary value in the past is 'worth' today. I have drawn on the well-respected 'Measuring Worth' (<https://www.measuringworth.com>), which offers ten different measures depending on the context. The two values of interest to me are the price of stock, and the value of companies. For the price of stocks, the Retail Price Index (RPI), which measures the cost in a given period of the goods and services purchased by a typical consumer, has been chosen as it provides an indication of what these stock would cost today relative to goods and services. For the value of companies, it is more useful to compare the measure relative to the importance of other projects within a community or country, in which case the share of GDP indicator is used. Note however, that these figures have been adjusted to the context of the United Kingdom and not South Africa.

During the period from 1902 to 1913, 37% of the Rand's gold yield, or 11% of the world's output, was produced by companies controlled by the CMIC, by its affiliate Rand Mines Limited, or by the creator of these, Wernher, Beit and Company; and in 1910 the group had control of raw gold worth about £12 million (£10,500,000,000 today) annually. By 1912, the Company produced 3.5 million ounces of gold and paid roughly £4,250,000 (£2,387,000,000 today) — 51% of the profits of the whole of the Witwatersrand. These three firms, along with Eckstein and Company, the Johannesburg representatives of the London-based private House, made up the most important of the several financial groupings which developed the Rand gold fields (Kubicek, 1979: 54-55; Fraser and Jeeves, 1977: 3).

The flotation of the CMIC was a notable success. Even before the shares were issued, they were being dealt in at £24 (£2,420 each today) though the nominal price was £20 (£1,940 today). For the 75,000 shares offered in Paris, there were applications for shares totalling £86,000,000 (circa £82,580,000,000 today), representing some 4,300,000 shares. The CMIC owned mining, industrial and commercial enterprises worldwide, including in Northern Rhodesia (Zambia), Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), Portuguese Africa (Angola and Mozambique), Bechuanaland, South Africa, and Britain. But by the time of the Union of South Africa (1910) and shortly after it, many of the original Randlords initially involved in the CMIC had retired or died. Plans to conclude the partnership of Wernher, Beit and Co and Eckstein and Co. were completed, with holdings on the Rand passed to the control of CMIC, and the diamond interests to L. Breitmeyer and Co.. Wernher died shortly after in May 1912, Beit had died in July 1906, Eckstein in January 1893, while his brother Friedrich, who had succeeded Wernher as chairman, had been forced out by anti-German hysteria at the beginning of World War One (Wheatcroft, 1984: 229). By the early 1920s, the only Randlords left on the Board were Lionel Phillips and Abe Bailey, both on the outer core of the original Porgès nexus.

The Porgès group was instrumental in how a number of Randlords gained positions of economic power and formed close economic ties. This financial structure did change significantly over time, but largely maintained the same insiders in its various corporate structures. A notable feature was the gradual monopolisation of finance equity, which not only facilitated the production and sale of diamonds and gold, but also acted as a crucial flow of information of the European commodity markets and local mining dynamics. The habit of incorporating more fringe operators into the grouping further facilitated the advantages gained through information in what was a cut-throat industry.

Importantly, the rise of the men involved had as much to do with their associations as with any personal qualities, creating an interdependency in which the Randlords in South Africa depended on group members in Europe in a myriad of financial, informational, marketing, and logistical ways; while those in Europe, like Porgès, the Rothschilds and other bankers and brokers,

depended on the South African end to realise their financial objectives. This interdependency further shifted the power balances between the Porgès group and other mining groups, allowing it to consume other groups in both friendly and hostile mergers and acquisitions. It was this interdependency which created the social positions that these men were able to gain, and in turn, which provided them with the basis of their wealth and power. In what ways did they exert influence over events?

In what follows, a number of letters and associated documents from the papers of the CMIC are analysed. As the collection was large, the sampling technique developed in the previous chapter was deployed. The CMIC is composed of 84 boxes and the sampling method was operationalized as earlier discussed, with some changes because only a portion of the collection related to the time-period and region of concern. The collection is subdivided into regions and geographical areas, with boxes focusing on Africa composing 46 of these. While boxes covering other regions might have documents of analytical value, these invariably covered periods outside of the time periods of interest (roughly between the 1920s and the 1960s), after the majority of the Randlords had died. Africa is in turn separated roughly into Central, North and Southern Africa, with the bulk of boxes focused on Southern Africa (33 Boxes). As a result, only boxes within the Africa collection were sampled, with more items being sampled in the Southern Africa Boxes.

Overall, the collection contains relatively few letters, and of these the majority are in French or German. Much of the collection is strictly business-related documents, including agreements, title deeds, leasing agreements, lists of base minerals, board minutes, mergers and acquisitions, mine specific documents and so on. However, the collection did contain various items of interest, which stood out around the range of events they cover. They were selected for detailed attention because concerning events of different kinds that took my attention because they indicate something analytically interesting about Randlords, whether dramatic or mundane.

THE ALBU LETTER TO JULIUS WERNHER

CONTEXT

George Albu wrote to Julius Wernher on 11 November 1894, in the midst of a significant period in South African history and its economy. Gold was discovered on the Witwatersrand over the period 1884 to 1886, then deep level mining was made possible in May 1890 by the MacArthur-Forrest cyanide process. Deep level mining however required an initial capital investment on a scale unprecedented in mining history, and even then there would be years of costly shaft-sinking before a reef was struck at depth and gold extracted. By the end of 1894, the deep-levels were in the midst of their expensive and risky programme of development. The still uncertain prospects of the deep-levels were then dealt a blow in the last months of 1895 when the collapse of a year-

long boom in South African mining shares “probably created crisis within the inner circles” of Rand Mines and of the Consolidated Gold Fields of South Africa, the chief deep-level companies. Most of their profits previously had come from speculation on a buoyant share-market and the sale of surplus mining claims at inflated prices (Blainey, 1965: 159).

George Albu (1857-1935) was an entrepreneur of German descent who had followed his brother Leopold to the Cape in 1876. They made their initial fortune in Kimberley, where George became the director of several small companies, ultimately selling out to De Beers. The brothers then moved to the Witwatersrand, as they were associated with several Kimberley businesses that had small outcrop gold mines on the central Rand, in particular with the Meyer and Charlton mine. Formed in 1888, its claim area was small, but it produced a relatively large quantity of gold in the first year. Lacking the backing of international capital, George Albu went to Europe in 1893 and received the support of Dresdner Bank, on which basis he formed the General Mining and Finance Corporation Limited in 1895 (Jones, 1995: 10).

The letter mentions Adolf Goerz (1857-1900). Goerz was born in Germany and trained as a mining engineer. His sister married a prominent industrialist who was the founding chairman of the Deutsche Bank in Berlin. Goerz was working as a consultant engineer in Berlin when, in 1888, Deutsche Bank was approached by Eduard Lippert. Lippert was a businessman and financier who hoped Deutsche Bank would support a mine concession; to gain expert advice about this, Deutsche Bank sent Goerz to the Witwatersrand, where he formed a syndicate with Deutsche Bank capital (Jones, 1995: 7). By 1891, Goerz had directorships in May Consolidated Mines, Crown Reef, the Meyer and Charlton, and Princess Estate. The original syndicate was turned into a private company, Adolf Goerz and Co., in 1892 (Jones, 1995: 10).

A financial crash in 1889 undermined the reputation of the Rand and ruined many promoters. Not only did the mining market experience the flow of money from international and local investors slowing, but the securities market was also largely inactive in the early 1890s. Mining conglomerates had three options to survive: tapping into their own resources, seeking capital from financial contacts in Europe, and the formation and flotation on the Stock Exchange of new mines and the reconstruction and refinancing of old ones (Kubicek, 1979: 64-66; Jones, 1995: 10). Most firms took a mixed approach, and a stock boom of 1894-95 featured enormous speculation and great scope for Rand promoters for profitable dealing. Wernher, Beit for example used the boom to strengthen its financial position through well-organized syndicates and pools, preventing indiscriminate large sales from depressing the price of shares in which it was interested (Kubicek, 1979: 67). This is the context giving rise to the Albu letter.

PRE-TEXT

This letter to Wernher is in Box 18 of the CMIC collection, composed of three files. The first two focus on Wernher, Beit correspondences between 1893-1894, while the third focuses on financial and organizational matters of the CMIC between 1899-1914. The first file, in which the letter is contained, includes two other letters from Albu, one to Wernher about business in Johannesburg, and another in German to Wernher and Beit concerning mining share purchase and other South African business. The file also contains a January 1894 cable from Albu to Beit announcing his return from somewhere. Contacts therefore indicate a close association between Albu and Beit and Wernher. The file also includes two letters to Wernher and Beit from William Henderson Clark of the Anglo-French Exploration Co. Ltd., one each from Felix Abraham, Barney Barnato and Bubna and one from Beit to Wernher.

The second file includes seven cables in English and German from Beit in the Alps, to Werner about share dealing. It also includes a telegram from Bailey to Beit regarding a horse win at racing, a letter from Brachford to Beit about East Rand Proprietary Mines, and two letters from Felix Abraham in Berlin to Wernher and Beit about Transvaal consolidated shares, Hirsch and Jacques de Giinzburg. These files are as such directly relevant to Randlordism in that they concern one of the major mining conglomerates in a time of rapid social change in South Africa and of crucial importance to the development of the Rand. The CMIC, with tentacles stretching across economic sectors and national borders, was in turn controlled by some of the most powerful and important Randlords, namely Alfred Beit and Julius Wernher, though others feature too.

The significance of this period in the history of goldmining in South Africa cannot be understated. There had been a similar gold rush to Barberton in the early 1880s. However, once these findings did not prove quite as significant as initially thought, and with the discovery of gold on the Rand, many of those who tried their luck in Barberton moved on to the Rand.

The Text

1 ^ Private ^

2 Johannesburg S.A.R.

3 G. & L Albu

Johannesburg S.A.R.

4 P.O. Box 1242

November 11th 1894

5 Telegraphic Address:

6 “Albu”

7

8 Dear Mr. Wernher,

9 With reference to our joint account in Meyer & Charltons we wish to draw your attention that the two
 10 parcels consisting of 1270 shares & 500 shares lately purchased by us and transferred to your local firm
 11 were actually our own shares held by the Natal Bank on our account. We did not raise any objections to
 12 this sale, being under the impression that the pool between your firm and Goerz & Co. had terminated on
 13 27 September. We did not mind your firm sharing the profits with us especially as you originally held an
 14 interest in the above holding but we certainly must object, now that we find that the pool had been removed,
 15 to the acquisition of the above mentioned 1750 shares (our own shares) being classed under 'Purchase for
 16 pool A/C'. This was not an ordinary purchase from a third party but simply a transfer of our holding from
 17 the Natal Bank to your firm on behalf of our joint account, which we deemed advisable to effect in the
 18 interest of our joint A/C. More especially to prevent the Bank to interfere with our market.

19 As to the renewal of the Pool with Goerz & Co. we fail to understand how this could have been done
 20 considering they have parted with 6000, nearly their entire holding, in one block besides their share in the
 21 pool A/C as they could not have had many shares left at the time when you renewed the pool. Besides, the
 22 result of the first pool was anything but satisfactory, the statements relating to same show losses on all
 23 transactions and worst of all they got rid of 2000 shares at a very low price. The manager of this account
 24 seems to have forgotten that it was Meyer & Charltons he was dealing in and not Bankets or any other
 25 rubbish which one would be glad to get rid of at any sacrifice. We are confident that Charlton's will see
 26 £10 within the next 12 months without pool or rig and we shall be pleased to hear soon of the final
 27 dissolution of the present arrangements with Goerz. + Co.

28 With Kindest regards we remain, dear Mr. Wernher,

29 Yours sincerely,

30 G & L Albu

31 P.S. I firmly believe that your firm here shares our sentiments regarding the pool. I took Mr Hamilton Smith
 32 through the mine the other day and he expressed himself highly pleased with what he saw. He would rather
 33 have M & Ch. than two Durban Roodepoorts. I again must say that we are awfully sorry the pool having
 34 been reopened and privately I may tell you G & L Co. cannot have 1000 shares left. Goerz himself was
 35 very much annoyed with the sale of 6000 shares. I shall shortly place with F.W. an order for a big hauling
 36 Engine for United Main Reef. The Co. starts with 50 [unreadable] within a few days.

37 George Albu³²

³² While the letter was from the G & L syndicate, as the headers are typed, the body of the letter and P.S. are hand-written.

Analysis

This is not a straightforward letter but has two components. The first is a formal letter between companies (G & L Albu to Wernher and Beit), signed G & L Albu, and was most likely written by a secretary. However, the “P.S.” is signed George Albu and is in a different handwriting, and it forms a more personal addition which probably also led to the addition of the “private” status of the letter. This indicates both a formal, business relationship between the two groups, and also a more personal relationship between Albu and Wernher.

The line “Private” (line 1) has been inserted at the head in a superordinate position, with no other emphasis given to its addition. Its lack of emphasis, and its late addition, indicates that the importance of this letter remaining private was not the original intention nor initially highly important to the writer. Nonetheless, its insertion covers the entire letter, though is likely only included to make private that component written personally by Albu.

The letter was written from Johannesburg and sent to Beit, Wernher via Albu’s Johannesburg office. This seems to imply that Albu was at the time in Johannesburg, and given that the letter includes a personal text written by Albu, indicates that Albu was likely at the offices. This raises the question, why did Albu not speak face-to-face with Beit, Wernher? The explanation is that Wernher was at his London office, where he was based. This is also indicated by Albu pointing to “your firm here” (line 31). Albu knew that Wernher was somewhere else, and this was London, from where Wernher managed the firm.

The use of “our” and “us” within the letter indicates a complex interconnection between seemingly disparate firms and people. The use of “our” in line 9 indicates that Beit, Wernher and the Albus shared an account in a mine, the Meyer & Charlton. It then states that shares purchased by “us” (line 10), referring to G & L Albu, were transferred to “your local firm” (line 10), referring to Wernher, Beit. The letter then moves on to mention an association between Wernher, Beit and Goerz and Co., through a pool. A pool was a popular financial practice in the late 19th and early 20th century, defined by a temporary affiliation between two or more companies, aimed at manipulating a stock’s price or volume. The letter then goes on to mention how the Albus were aware of a renewed pool between Wernher, Beit and Goerz & Co. This indicates that these three separate firms worked closely together to distort the market to their own benefit, and the lines between mines, companies and individuals was anything but clear. However, in this case this association meant that Wernher, Beit were able to make decisions that affected the Albus, being what the Albus viewed as a short selling of shares in a mine which they believed to be promising. This can be seen in lines 16 to 18 where the Albus state that Wernher had mistaken a transaction made by the Albu company for a third-party transaction for Beit, Wernher specifically.

The Albus indicate that they believe (by the tone of line 19 “we fail to understand”) that Beit, Wernher’s opening of a pool was not a mistake, and was in fact on purpose. The Albus were not happy with the result of the first pool, as they felt shares were sold far too cheaply (lines 23-24). The Albus then indicate that these shares, especially those of Meyer and Charlton, would be worth far more without the artificial increase in price and volume from such pools (lines 25-27). This indicates that these companies actively worked together to inflate the price of mines with low prospects, but on occasion disagreed about which mines fall into this category and which do not. In addition, the flow of information was very much controlled.

The Albus were clearly not entirely in ‘the know’ of what Wernher, Beit were doing, and this may well have been on purpose. Companies cooperated where there was an incentive to do so, and would actively work against each other where it was in their interests. George Albu’s more personal plea in the final P.S. is an attempt to make use of his personal relationship with Wernher to increase cooperation. Albu was perhaps aware that the more impersonal company letter would not have the desired effect. This letter overall was strongly intended and important to the Albus. This can be further seen in lines 26-27 where the Albus state that “we shall be pleased to hear soon of the final dissolution of the present arrangements with Goerz”. This statement does not leave much space for negotiation, is strongly stated, and seemingly has the implication of a threat.

The tone of the document suddenly changes in the P.S. The P.S. moves from distant formalities in the previous section, to a more personal note, as if to indicate that Wernher’s actions concerned an associate and potentially a friend, rather than simply being company actions. This can be seen in the extensive use of “I”, which appears five times between lines 31 and 36. The way in which Albu states “your firm here” (line 31) also seems to indicate that there was a distinction between what Wernher’s associates in South Africa believed to be the best course of action, and what Wernher believed and ultimately did. This also indicates an association between Albu and Wernher’s firm; Albu knew the sentiment within Wernher, Beit and Co., which may have added to his surprise and anger regarding the course of events. This is further indicated by Albu “privately” (line 34) informing Wernher about the number of shares Goerz held, as if sharing insider information to strengthen his emotional appeal.

Wernher would likely have sent a request to South Africa to follow through with the opening of the pool and sale of shares; yet, instead of sending the letter to Wernher in London, Albu sent it to the South African offices. This is probably because this is where such decisions were implemented, and so that those working in South Africa were aware that Wernher was being cautioned and could place some pressure on Wernher in the future to act in line with the Albu’s wishes.

Albu also mentions Hamilton Smith, who was an American mining engineer involved in the formation of the Consolidated Deep Levels, the Transvaal and General Association and a number of other enterprises. With links to the Rothschilds, it was Smith who persuaded the Rothschilds to expand their interests in South Africa (Clendenen, Collins, Duignan 1966: 92). Smith was as such a trusted mining engineer, whose high opinion of the Meyer and Charlton mine must have increased Albu's frustration regarding the sale of its shares. Albu also seems to mention Smith to support his argument that the sale of shares was a poor decision, and that Wernher has lost out on a high value mine.

Questions remain however regarding the meaning of the letter. Much of the financial dealings between the Albus, Wernher, Beit, Goerz, have been lost in time, with the result that the financial context in which this letter was embedded cannot be drawn on. In addition, information on these mines is scarce. Durban Roodepoort Deep, and Roodepoort United Main Reef, were near each other on the western portion of the Rand, but little has been written about them. The elliptical nature of this letter is however to be expected. Letters of substance, written between parties who share and assume knowledge, within a context of rapid and profound change, coupled by the complexities of the mining industry, will often only be partly understood by future researchers who cannot 'access' the context of the time. Micro events such as this also cut into the complexities of everyday life; the relationships between people, people and corporations, which are processual and embedded in specific contexts. These micro processes are usually ignored in exchange for the larger, macro processes.

Micro events unearth aspects of the Randlords and their activities which are usually overlooked because of the usual emphasis on larger, macro events. Much of the activities of the Randlords were however concerned with smaller happenings, and these interconnected with their relationships with others, their financial dealings and plans, and how they approached their different interests and contacts. In this case, it is clear that the Randlords operated as groups in cases where their interests aligned, and as individuals where they conflicted. Indeed, there may be times, as described, where they cooperated on general matters of cooperation and joint benefit, but conflicted on the details of the unfolding relationship. These relationships were also highly fluid. In 1899 for example, because of a rivalry between the Albu and Goerz groups, Goerz lost its part in Meyer and Charlton as a consequence of a squabble over who should succeed Adolf Goerz as a consulting engineer to the mine (Jones, 1995: 12). These individuals were in other words highly self-interested and strategic, and alliances of whatever sort only formed where both parties believed they benefited. In terms of financial dealings at least, and action was only undertaken where it was believed it would benefit an individual, or by proxy, a corporation.

This letter is fundamentally performative, drawing on two quite different forms of reasoning. The first is the logical and formal, whereby Albu attempts to influence Wernher by calling on 'facts',

that a reputable mining engineer believes the mine to be good, and so Wernher was wrong to sell the shares. The second is emotional; the inclusion of the more personal note in the P.S. is an attempt to influence Wernher's emotional loyalty to Albu, to use their friendship as a leverage to influence Wernher's actions.

POST-TEXT

Whether the Albu letter to Wernher was successful or not is unknown. The CMIC collection does not contain any further relevant documents, nor do secondary sources discuss this specific event. The reason is that it is a micro event, and relatedly that the business dealings of these men and corporations were ever-changing and very complex. A thorough understanding would require an immensely rich and detailed collection, which does not exist, and a highly-focused study on the business dealings of these companies during this specific time period. But more generally, it is rarely possible to determine whether a letter has its desired effects, due to the absence of either further correspondences or substantive changes in behaviour.

SUCCEEDING CONTEXT

The Albu letter however does provide an indication that these Randlords, and likely many others, had both professional and private relationships. The companies they controlled at times worked together towards joint interests through financial pools, but also worked against each other where it was to their benefit. The more personal relationships between Randlords acted as a slight buffer towards this, and were used as a mechanism through which the actions of other Randlords could be directed to some degree. This level of cooperation and linking between members of an elite group indicates the existence of a figuration, but one in which the links holding it together were both shifting and at times contested. These links formed the context in which such letters were written and exchanged and in which their performative aspects played out.

THE LARK SYNDICATE DISPUTE

CONTEXT

Box 23 of the Papers of the CMIC is composed by two files, containing documents relating to what is termed the Lark Syndicate (Doornfontein) dispute, which I later found had occurred between 1893-1911. When I first came across it, a web search and literature review regarding the 'Lark Syndicate' or dispute failed to bring up any results other than a map of Rand gold mines, so prior understanding of what these 200-odd documents were about was absent. My first research visits to the Bodleian Library therefore overlooked these documents, which seemed to cover a

legal dispute over land, but did not appear to contain material that could tell me about Randlordism.

However, prior to a later research trip, I noted some potentially interesting items from the catalogue for these files. The most interesting is a letter from J.P. Cregoe, who does not appear in the formal story of South African mining history, sent to important Randlord Lionel Phillips and dated 26 July 1907. It mentions a number of key individuals, businesses and areas, including Julius Wernher and Frederik Bezuidenhout, with the latter having owned a number of the key farms underneath which important Rand mines were later developed. It was when Doornfontein was noted in an ancillary document as the location of the Lark that the significance of the letter became apparent. The letter provides a glimpse into how the Randlords operated in securing their interests, and the processes by which goldmining gradually came to be dominated by a few major corporations.

Doornfontein was one of twenty farms which became the future city of Johannesburg. The farm was bought by a Dutch immigrant, Frederik Jacobus Bezuidenhout, and was proclaimed a public digging in 1886. It was then thrown open to diggers. In 1886 W.B. Shurmer and Jan Eloff, who was at that time Mining Commissioner at Johannesburg, entered into an agreement whereby Bezuidenhout Senior gave to the other parties the surface rights of the then-open ground on Doornfontein, to enable them to lay out mining stands. On 24 April 1888, Bezuidenhout Senior entered into an agreement with Eloff and Shurmer by which he let to the latter for a term of 80 years as much of the open ground upon the said farm as they might wish to use or grant to others as stands.

After Shurmer obtained this contract in May 1888, he pegged some 73 claims on Doornfontein, for which he obtained licenses from the Mining Commissioner. He then approached the Mining Commissioner again to obtain permission to allow the area to be laid out in stands. Whether he received this permission is the crux of the Lark Syndicate legal dispute, turning on whether the Mining Commissioner had the right to allow stands to be laid out without government permission due to changes regarding a Gold Law of 1888. Bezuidenhout Junior laid out his own claims, and entered into a contract with the Government whereby he became entitled to lay out "Bezuidenville". The Stroyan Syndicate of Shurmer's claims overlapped with Bezuidenhout's Jnr's claims, although its claims had expired. Bezuidenhout Jnr. had agreed to cede to Shurmer all the right to the title and interest, including mineral rights in the properties known as Bezuidenville, which Bezuidenhout Jnr had laid out, and Prospect township, which Shurmer had laid out. These licenses to claims were owned by the Lark Syndicate, which had bought them for £30,000, and in turn they were owned by the Ecksteins, acting as the Lark Syndicate. The question is whether Shurmer, by allowing his claim licenses to lapse, had abandoned his rights to that portion of the ground. A verbal (not written) agreement was made, according to Shurmer, that the

licenses would be extended two months, which the Lark Syndicate denied. Max Langermann in turn got Shurmer to sign a letter acknowledging the lapse of the agreement, agreeing to create a new contract, which he did not do. These grounds were valued at £3,000,000. Shurmer claimed to be entitled to 245 claims on Doornfontein, or in the alternative to £3,000,000 in damages, or about £318,000,000 in today's money.

The result of the legal dispute was of “absolution from the instance” with costs, meaning that the court could not decide who to believe and dropped the case, resulting in the Ecksteins/Lark Syndicate maintaining their claims. The importance of this legal dispute, then, lies in the significance of these early days of goldmining and the consolidation of interests.

In 1893, Shurmer and Cregoe took the Lark Syndicate to Court for non-performance of contract, whereby Shurmer claimed that he was defrauded out of the contract by Max Langermann, who was acting on behalf of the Lark Syndicate. Shurmer claimed to have had a verbal agreement with Bezuidenhout Snr for an extension on his option for the Bezuindeville claims, while Bezuidenhout Snr had given these options to his son, Bezuidenhout Jnr, who had in turn sold the options to the Lark Syndicate. In this first court case, Shurmer appears to have won, and maintained his contract to the claims.

However, in another Court case of 1896, it transpired that Cregoe did not have the money to realise the option, hence why it lapsed. A further claim was brought against Cregoe, that there had been an illegal agreement in which a person with no previous interest in a lawsuit had financed it with a view to sharing the disputed property if the suit succeeded, and this was proven. This outside funder turned out to be a syndicate formed of Barney Barnato, Caldecott, W. Adler, and Dr. Bertram. They had given Cregoe £5000 for his alleged rights, but with the understanding that the cost of the action would be paid out of it. In late August 1896, Cregoe disappeared from the case, and the syndicate could not continue with the case without a plaintiff. In 1904 Wernher, Beit & Co., asked the High Court to again compel Shurmer to protect his rights or retire into perpetual silence. The Court ordered him into perpetual silence. Shurmer had by this time appealed to every court in South Africa and the UK, and his case had been rejected by each.

In 1907, there was a proposed amalgamation scheme in Johannesburg concerning the City Deep, South City, Wolhuter Deep, and South Wolhuter Gold Mining Companies, which included 235 gold mining claims which Wernher & Beit & Co. had obtained from Bezuidenhout. This amalgamation spurred Cregoe to try one of his last resorts, which involved contacting Lionel Phillips.

These small processes of acquisitions, defaulting and monopolisation are what allowed a small group of companies, and the men behind them, to gain control of the goldfields, and ultimately the wealth, connections and power that ensued. This dispute provides a rare glimpse into one

aspect of this whereby Wernher, Beit and Co., through a syndicate which they controlled, gained control of some of the richest gold mines on the East Rand, and which were later amalgamated into one of the largest gold mining companies in the world, the CMIC. It not only indicates how one group of associated Randlords were able to take control of a highly valued part of the Rand, but shows the way in which they were able to collude together, with smaller parties, and against each other.

PRE-TEXT

The immediate pre-text to his letter of 26 July 1907 is that Cregoe had originally written to Wernher regarding the Lark Syndicate almost seven months prior. In response to a conversation with Wernher about it, and a personal call from Cregoe, Lionel Phillips wrote to Cregoe on 25 July 1907. In this letter, Cregoe writes that Phillips “protested” against the “tone” Cregoe had adopted, and Phillips also claimed that Cregoe had “no moral or legal claim” to the land and mining claims. Cregoe’s letter of 26 July 1907 following is a direct response to this.

THE TEXT

1 (Copy.)³³ “Tredinick” Mayow Road
 2 Sydenham S.E.

3 July 26th 1907

4 Dear Sir

5 Re: Lark Syndicate

6 I beg to thank you for your letter of the 25th inst. + note your remarks.

7 I have no wish to force my correspondence on you, but certain remarks in your letter call for a reply. You
 8 have seen fit to privately protest, to me, against the tone to my letter to Sir J. Wernher of Dec. last, but
 9 when taken in connection with your opinion, that I have no moral or legal claim on your firm, as expressed
 10 in your yesterday’s letter to me, it would certainly have been expected that your protest would have taken
 11 the form of a criminal prosecution against me.

12 Your suggestion that I have no claim, legal or moral, against your firm, surely cannot be taken seriously,
 13 and is only of convenience to you so long as you can keep out of the Courts where such actions are usually
 14 adjusted. Your firm has already in the Transvaal Court owned that you are in possession of the property in
 15 consequence of my arrangement with Bezuidenhout & Schurmer & you having taken up Bezuidenhout’s
 16 position by indemnifying him against every action, it would be interesting to know how you can repudiate
 17 the obligations to this under the agreement? Certainly by no moral nor legal right.

³³ This document is a copy of an original. This line was added by the CMIC to indicate this.

- 18 Yours truly
 19 J.P. Cregoe
 20 L. Phillips Esq.,
 21 1 London Wall Buildings
 22 London EC.
 23 ^I am sending a copy of this to joh³⁴

ANALYSIS

The Lark Syndicate dispute was essentially a South African issue, the outcome of which would have significance for the organization of its mining business and capital. Yet, the contacts mentioned between Cregoe and Phillips occurred in London. The reason for this is most likely that much of the capital, social networks and companies which ran the Rand mines and associated business activity were based in London and other key European cities. Through these networks, this dispute was South African in geology and geography, while the competing companies were European, the capital was European, and much of the dispute occurred in Europe.

Cregoe begins with a formality, expressing his gratitude for the letter from Phillips (line 6). Yet, this ‘thanks’ does not quite fit the usual polite tone of letters of the period. The sense is conveyed that Cregoe included this simply as a formality, but did not mean it, given that at the time expressions of gratitude were conventionally fuller. Cregoe continues in line 7 with polite formalities, though in this case the formalities contradict his actions. Phillips’s letter of 25 July, discussed later, made it quite clear that he did not wish to continue with the correspondence, and indeed had the letter written by his secretary to increase the distance he was attempting to draw between himself and Cregoe. In his reply, while Cregoe claims he does not want to force his response on Phillips, that is precisely what his letter does. However, Cregoe does this in a way that makes it appear as if he was forced to some degree to respond, making it seem as though responsibility for the continuity of the conversation was in fact fully with Phillips. In line 8, Cregoe also seems to imply that there had been a face-to-face meeting between him and Phillips – “privately protested” – following an earlier letter Cregoe had sent to Wernher.

Cregoe seems to be reading more into the letter from Phillips (in Appendix 6) about a personal dynamic than the letter really contains. Cregoe thus appears to be seeking conversation, while Phillips and behind him Wernher and the Ecksteins are pulling away. This is further corroborated by Cregoe insisting in lines 10-12, and then again in line 13-15, that him having “no moral or

³⁴ The CMIC added this line.

legal claim” to the Bezuidenhout claims is only Phillips’ opinion, and that whether this is true or not should be determined in Court. In fact, it seems that Cregoe is doing whatever he can to be heard in Court by provoking Phillips to prosecute him. Prior to this point, Cregoe had pushed the case in several South African and British Courts, though his case was either rejected or he simply lost the case. The CMIC had by this point gained a decree of perpetual silence, and were gradually shutting Cregoe out as best it could, while Cregoe desperately sought to be heard in Court. This particular exchange occurred 14 years after the initial dispute began.

Cregoe then clarifies exactly what his position is at this point. He states that “your firm”, referring to the CMIC, managed to gain ownership of the properties under dispute as a result of Cregoe’s “arrangement” (line 15) with Bezuidenhout and Shurmer. In other words, Cregoe is claiming that the CMIC owed Cregoe something for this initial arrangement, with this being his moral right. The legal right referred to is likely to be the original ownership Cregoe had over these properties, which the courts decided had expired, though Cregoe (line 16) also indicates that Bezuidenhout was protected and supported in order to gain control of the properties, which he views as morally wrong. However, it seems that another conglomerate including Barney Barnato had supported Cregoe and Shurmer, though their case was lost and hence their disappearance from the issue.

This letter is therefore composed of numerous intertextual references and references to events, with the letter very much being the result of years – 14 of them – of activity and dispute. The letter not only references Phillips’s letter of 25 July, but perhaps more importantly Cregoe’s letter, and also likely letters exchanged with Wernher. This letter of 26 July is thus an offshoot of a larger and longer communication between Cregoe and Wernher, Phillips, their respective conglomerates, and the events and court cases which they had been through. A noticeable difference between the letter writers is the differing interpretations of each other’s actions and intentions. The letter from Phillips on 25 July (in Appendix 6) is short, succinct, written by a secretary and is thus impersonal, and it clearly indicates his desire to end communication between the two parties. Yet, Cregoe did not accept this closure, and instantly replied. Cregoe’s interests rested on the continuance of communication; as soon as communication ends, so does the possibility of Cregoe getting anything out of his years of legal action and wrangling. Thus, Cregoe does his best to provoke Phillips to open a court case, for Cregoe himself can no longer do, given that he had exhausted any possibility of taking further legal action. The CMIC had therefore successfully shut Cregoe out, with these letters being Cregoe’s final desperate attempts.

While these letter exchanges are between Cregoe and Phillips, there are wider and more complicated interweaving networks behind Phillips. The reason for Phillips being involved in this dispute in the first place was that he was at the time Chairman of the CMIC, which meant that the fate of these properties directly concerned him, and hence why Cregoe took letters from him so seriously. It should also be noted that by this time, Wernher and many other Randlords had largely

retired to London, with their activity in South Africa largely confined to decisions they made in London. The CMIC was additionally a holding company for a small though powerful and influential group, the Ecksteins. Phillips is thus not only representing Bezuidenhout, Wernher, and the CMIC, but a larger figuration whose interests encapsulated all of the discrete elements.

POST-TEXT

The immediate result of this letter was a response from Phillips dated 29 July 1907. However, this letter unfortunately and oddly is not within the files. What *is* within the files of the CMIC collection is Cregoe's response (Appendix 7) to this, sent on 30 July. This letter begins with a highly provoking remark, whereby Cregoe refutes Phillips' claims by pointing out that his opinion is directly opposed to judgements in court and also to Phillips' own counsel (lines 8-11). Cregoe states his position in this way not only to make his point, but to try once again provoke Phillips into legal action, which is clearly Cregoe's goal. Cregoe continues in this vein with sarcasm – line 12 with “undoubtedly thoughtful of you” – and doing whatever he can to aggravate Phillips enough to take legal action.

Cregoe's letter then takes a strange turn, which indicates something more about Cregoe's underlying feeling about the matter. Cregoe claim that Phillips' letter “leads one to believe you have a grievance against me” (line 17). Cregoe seems to be of the opinion that the dispute is as much personal as it is professional. While the Ecksteins, Wernher and Phillips in particular have treated it purely as a legal dispute, Cregoe seems to have viewed the dispute as a personal attack, not just his syndicate being frozen out of prime mining claims. Cregoe's personalising of the issue lies in “freezing him out” (line 23), which he sees as justifying his approach of doing what he can to be heard, ideally in court.

Cregoe was indeed ‘frozen out’, he was powerless to act himself, and he believed fairness or an “honourable compromise” to mean that the CMIC should either give him money or claims. Unfortunately for Cregoe, he was on the wrong end of what was and remains common business competition and practice, though Cregoe viewed it as much a personal grievance as a business strategy. From the CMIC perspective, there was no legal liability towards Cregoe, and the moral case was not a central part of business ideology and practice of the time. Cregoe and this case was likely viewed as one of many such cases occurring over the years, and there is no indication within the collection that the CMIC budged on this issue.

These early disputes were a crucial means through which the Randlords and their respective corporations were able to monopolise the gold industry into relatively few hands. This example is but one instance of the mechanisms by which the Randlords were able to achieve this. The introduction of a syndicate including Barney Barnato to support Cregoe and Shurmer on the one hand, and the CMIC backing Bezuidenhout on the other, shows how they attempted to realise

their interests by backing and conniving certain parties, to realise their own interests, while freezing out other competing interests. At this stage, Phillips was still very much active, and remained active until the 1920s, while Wernher had largely retired, and the figuration which he had created had taken on a life of its own and his position was later superseded by new men.

SUCCEEDING CONTEXT

The changes which the Randlords were involved in were clearly quite rapid. Areas of land worth inordinate amounts fell under the control of small groups of men in relatively short periods of time. In addition, the structure of the figurations they were involved in shifted along with these changes, making for evolving networks of people, capital, companies, and land. A defining feature of this change was a degree of ruthlessness; those companies and people who lost in these disputes were often forced to default and were absorbed; the individuals who controlled them disappeared in the pages of history. Those who controlled the dominating companies became increasingly important, whether in politics, business, economic affairs or warfare.

This letter from Cregoe to Phillips provides a window into the way in which land and the rights to the minerals under that land was gained and how these processes of amalgamation happened. In the formal story of history, what forms the emphasis are the ‘big events’ – major amalgamations, such as between the Barnatos and Rhodes of the mineral world. The letter provides a glimpse into the smaller, gradual and effective processes by which Wernher and Beit were able to ‘muscle out’ and silence competition, a normal and common process that had been happening for decades, at least since diamonds and Kimberley, and an ordinary process of big business. What Cregoe’s letter also shows is how these groups of elite men backed smaller parties to realise their own interests; thus the Barnato Syndicate never had an interest in the dispute until it realised how it could ‘get in’ and benefit from the outcome. Such smaller processes are as much the drivers of social change as Sewell’s (2005) larger events; these smaller events add up, while the larger events are so rare as to be unable to explain ordinary change.

KITZINGER AND TJ MILNER LETTERS, 1917

The letters to be discussed now were written in April 1917 with a covering letter of May 1917. The letters are between senior administrative figures in two companies: Consolidated Mines Selection Co. (CMSC) and CMIC. The CMSC was established in Britain in 1897 at the time of the great monopoly formations in South Africa’s gold mining history. At this point, the hub of gold mining was in the Central Witwatersrand, where the CMSC had few investments, instead speculating following the first South African War of 1880-1881 in the Far East Rand. These properties were difficult to establish, and as a result the CMSC ran into financial difficulties and

was in 1906 taken over by A. Dunkelsbuhler and Co., a diamond trading syndicate controlled by the Oppenheimer family (Innes, 1984, 90). However, when drilling and other forms of deep level exploration revealed the full potential of the Far East Rand (which included the immensely rich Springs and Brakpan gold mines), the Oppenheimers used the CMSC to expand their interests there by buying up shareholdings in the Transvaal Coal Trust (TCT) – the largest property owner in the region. By 1916, the year the true potential of this area became known, the takeover of the TCT was completed and the company was renamed the Rand Selection Company (RSC). Primarily through their interests in these three companies, the Oppenheimers came to control the richest gold-bearing areas in the richest gold field in South Africa (Innes, 1984: 90).

In 1905, Dunkelsbuhler and Company had disposed of their Johannesburg business to the CMSC. This led to closer relations between the two firms, by allowing the Dunkelsbuhlers to appoint three directors, one of whom was Mr. B. Kitzinger, who occupied a seat in the CMSC from 1905 as its managing director in London (Gregory, 1962: 81). Louis Oppenheimer became a member of the London board in 1912, while the London Committee was composed of Dunkelsbuhler representatives – Kitzinger, Wetzlar and F.W. Green, all of whom were on the board of Consolidated Mines.

In 1916, the relations between the two companies became closer still. The largest shareholder in the TCT was the CMSC. At a special general meeting of the TCT held on 23 June 1916, the name of the TCT was changed to Rand Selection Corporation Limited. The meeting also approved a provisional deed of agreement between the two companies by virtue of which, firstly, the Rand Selection Corporation was lent up to £300,000 for a period of five years by the CMSC; secondly, the Rand Selection Corporation was given, for a period of ten years, a participating right to the extent of 25% ‘in any new mining ventures or mining business in South Africa which the Consolidated Mines Selection Company shall acquire during that period and on terms not less favourable than those on which the Consolidated Mines Selection Company may acquire the same’. Lastly, CMSC was given a five-year option to buy 100,000 shares in Rand Selection with the latter corporation agreeing to create and issue such shares in order to satisfy the exercise of the option (Gregory, 1962: 82).

Although these investments afforded the Oppenheimers vast potential to expand their base of accumulation, the group was not particularly well placed to develop that potential. In the first place, the immense capital requirements of development work could not be met by the group’s own financial resources, which were strained by its recent acquisition of the TCT. Nor could war-torn Europe be expected at that time to cater for the needs of developing gold mines in South Africa, as the CMS had many German shareholders and directors, causing it to be unpopular during World War I. As a result, the Oppenheimers turned their attention to the expanding capital markets of the USA, and with £2 million of authorised capital, formed the Anglo-American

Corporation of South Africa on 25 December 1917 specifically to tap into American capital.³⁵ The letters were, then, written in the final stages of the capitalisation of gold, and the introduction of the Oppenheimers, Anglo-American and the modern period of gold production.

PRE-TEXT

The letters discussed are in file 7 of box 22A of the CMIC collection, which focuses on miscellaneous records of gold mining companies between 1895 and 1965. The file is composed of copies of correspondence and proposed Agreements between Central Mining and Consolidated Mines Selection Co. Ltd, reporting financial operations for the mining development of the Far East Rand. The letters for discussion are to director and administrator T.J. Milner of the CMS, from Managing Director B. Kitzinger of the CMIC. They concern operations on the Far East Rand and are part of an ongoing correspondence with various enclosures and are a covering letter and its attachment.

The letter or cover of 1 May 1917 and its attachment to that of 13 April are focused on closer association between the two companies, an association verging on merger. Both companies sought a mutually beneficial relationship in terms of all economic activity on the far east Rand, as well as in terms of control. Yet, these high-level decisions are being made by individuals who, while senior figures, were not of the highest rank of importance. The letters seem to indicate that it was very much Milner and Kitzinger doing the work behind the scenes of bringing these companies closer together.

THE FIRST TEXT

- 1 The Consolidated Mines Selection Company, Limited.³⁶
- 2 Telegraphic Address 5, London Wall Buildings
- 3 "INTERLINK, LONDON". Finsbury Circus.
- 4 Telephones: 5216 & 5217 Wall. London, 1st May, 1917.
- 5 ^ Confidential ^ E.C.
- 6 T.J. Milner, Esq.,
- 7 THE CENTRAL MINING & INVESTMENT CORPORATION LTD:
- 8 1, London Wall Buildings, E.C.

³⁵ <http://www.referenceforbusiness.com/history2/35/Anglo-American-Corporation-of-South-Africa-Limited.html>

³⁶ The first part of this letter, this page, was typed, while the accompanying letter is a handwritten carbon copy of the original.

9 My dear Milner,
 10 I am in receipt of yours of yesterday's date with enclosures, for which I am much obliged.
 11 Herewith please find your letter of the 10th April last.
 12 Yours sincerely,
 13 B. Kitzienger

THE SECOND TEXT

1 13 April 7
 2 Confidential
 3 My dear Milner,
 4 Sir Lionel + I met several of the directors of the M.S. at lunch one day last week when the matter of seats
 5 was discussed and also the more important question of closer relations between the two groups.
 6 The official letter deals fully with the question of seats and there is no necessity for me to enlarge on that
 7 subject, but I think you will agree that the decision we arrived at was the only possible one in the
 8 circumstances.
 9 For some time past propositions have been going on with a view to establishing more intimate business
 10 relations with these friends and an agreement has now been practically concluded. I must ask you to be
 11 good enough to keep the arrangement strictly private, and please to not mention it to Lynch as I understand
 12 the M.S. are not waiting for him at present.
 13 The agreement will probably be for 5 years (the M.S. wanted 10 years, which we consider too long). Each
 14 party undertakes to offer the other 30% in all financial transactions on the far Eastern Rand to be accepted
 15 wholly or partly or declined. It is not intended to limit or curtail competition for the four mines (Geduld,
 16 Springs, de Rietfontein), each party being free to tender at its discretion without discussing or disclosing
 17 terms to the other. As regards management and control, there is a provisio that if some of the parties secures
 18 four or three leases [unreadable] has the option of taking the management of one lease (to be established
 19 by the successful tenderer) subject to his taking a full 30% in the financing. Proportionate representation
 20 on the boards of the lease cos. concerned is provided for, and the term 'party', so far as this part of the
 21 agreement is concerned, includes any company comprised on the respective administration of the
 22 [unreadable] of the companies [unreadable].
 23 The management is extended for the other properties on the Witwatersrand Goldfields situated east of East
 24 Rand Prop. Mines and n. of Heidelberg. Where either party has interests already enjoined with others (for
 25 instance in our case Holfontein, Palmiet Rand, Grootfontein etc.) the 30% to be offered to the other party
 26 in financial transactions relating thereto applies only for the interest said party assets have in such financing.
 27 Thus any interest the Rand Mines Ltd. possess in such properties should not be included in our interest.

28 Later on I will send you a copy of the letter which we shall exchange with the M.S. embodying the
 29 arrangement but I thought it advisable in the meantime to give you the chief points.

30 With sincere regards,

31 Yours sincerely,

32 B. Kitzinger

ANALYSIS

These letters form part of an ongoing correspondence between Milner and Kitzinger, Milner³⁷ being a director and administrator of the CMSC, and Kitzinger a director of the CMIC. They refer intertextually to three prior letters as well as a face-to face meeting. The first reference is in the covering letter and mentions “yesterday’s date”, which was 30 April; the second is a letter of 10 April which is said to be attached, yet the actually attached letter is dated 13 April, which seems to indicate various letters between Milner and Kitzinger over a brief period. The 13 April letter also mentions a meeting (line 4) between Lionel Phillips, Kitzinger and directors of the CMSC, where seats on the boards of directors of shared ownership mines were discussed, as well as closer relations between the CMIC and the CMSC.

The covering letter is a formal, typed letter, with the only handwritten inclusions being Kitzinger’s signature, and “confidential” having been added to the upper left of the document. The attached letter is handwritten and might have been intended to be typed out by a secretary or else remain strictly private between them. The inclusion of a “confidential” on the covering letter seems to indicate that, while it is bland and devoid of information, it was still felt necessary to mark it as confidential presumably because of the rather explosive content of the letter it ‘covered’.

The covering letter also mentions receipt of a letter of 30 April which included enclosures. What these enclosures were is not mentioned. However, these were likely correspondences written by Kitzinger regarding this arrangement between these two companies. In a note written 30 April 1917 on one of the agreements, it is stated that “the originals were returned to Consolidated M.S. at their request as no agreement was reached”, and signed Kitzinger. While this particular agreement fell through, it seems that these agreements were common practice for the C.M.S. at the time, having recently formed a similar deal with the Coal Trust. However, this letter seems to indicate (line 9-11) that here an agreement *was* reached, and this agreement should be kept “strictly private”, and Kitzinger felt it necessary to state that this should not be mentioned to Lynch.

³⁷ Thomas John Milner does not appear to have any familial links to Alfred Milner.

F.R. Lynch had succeeded W.L. Honnold as the managing director in South Africa of both the CMSC and Rand Selection Trust (formerly the Coal Trust) and would later become the deputy chairman of the Anglo-American Corporation. Lynch had originally travelled to South Africa with Oppenheimer as special representative for Dunkelsbuhler and Company, and thus had a close working relationship with Oppenheimer (Gregory, 1962: 83). Why it was stressed that Lynch was excluded remains elliptical, for he was likely closely tied to these types of negotiations. Nonetheless, this agreement was in reality about a closer association between four highly interwoven firms: Dunkelsbuhler and Company, the Transvaal Coal Trust, the CMSC, and the CMIC, without clear boundaries existing between these firms.

Kitzinger then continues the letter (lines 7-8) by stating that a “decision was arrived at” which was in the “official letter”, and that the knowledge of what this decision was shared by the two of them. This is a highly elliptical statement, and indicates that Milner and Kitzinger had been communicating quite frequently, and that the two knew each other well enough that Milner would know what he was referring to, and that he would or had come to the same conclusion regarding seats on the board. Kitzinger also refers to a “we”, which in this case seems to refer to the two of them, again indicating that this decision was made by them, or at the very least a small group (Phillips is mentioned) from the two companies.

In line 13, Kitzinger once again uses the term “we” after mentioning the M.S., that is, the CMS. ‘We’ in this context could refer to Kitzinger and Milner, or it could refer to Kitzinger and a group within the CMIC. Nonetheless, Kitzinger chose to use this term assuming that Milner would know what he is referring to and it shows there was an inner ‘we’.

Line 9-11 provides an indication of how these companies viewed each other. Rather than competition, the term “friend” is used, and the fact that this was kept “strictly private” indicates that at higher levels these two companies were indeed very close and viewed their relationship as both a business and social matter. The purpose of keeping this arrangement strictly private is also likely a lynch pin that helped maintain and strengthen their relationship, keeping Milner firmly in the frame of what is happening, while excluding others, namely Lynch who was holding a formally higher position in the corporation than Kitzinger.

Kitzinger then states that the agreement will “probably be for 5 years”, and points to the company “M.S.” as if it is a separate entity from him and Milner. What this seems to indicate is that there was a formal separation between these groups of directors and the administrators from each company and their relationship, concerning the relationship between the companies which they controlled. However, the fact that both companies were willing to share management and control and opportunities to further power and control of the Far East Rand with one another shows a

degree of trust and cooperation often not seen amongst seemingly competing companies, a kind of semi-amalgamation.

Kitzinger is also comfortable detailing this agreement with Milner, which not only involves very close financial cooperation and control between the two companies, but also considerable privy knowledge. Kitzinger is clearly quite happy for Milner and the CMSC to have intimate details of the business activities of the CMIC, which flies in the face of the logic and practice of capitalism and competition. What this seems to indicate is that, at this stage of capital development in the industry, friendship and social bonds often interfaced with the strict logics of capitalism and corporatization that would later dominate the gold and diamond industries in South Africa.

In lines 28-29, Kitzinger states that he thought it advisable to give Milner “the chief points” of the arrangement before the formal agreement was laid out, and this begs the question of why Kitzinger felt this. The most likely explanation is that it was the importance of the relationship between them (connected by their joint links to Phillips, as noted later) that made all these higher-level decisions happen, and it was necessary for Milner to know in advance before any decisions were made, to ensure that they did occur. In other words, these individuals made decisions of significance before these were officially proposed to the wider audience of directors and shareholders, decisions which those who had formal control were seemingly making were in fact being made without their awareness of what was happening behind the scenes.

The list of rich mines involved in this deal (line 15-16) is startling, and by this stage in the gold industry’s development it was well-known that these were some of the most productive mines, so this sharing of interests and opportunities borders on amalgamation. But this business decision was made by these two men on an individual and local level, rather than an organizational level. In lines 28-29, Kitzinger’s comment shows that they are in essence deciding the outcome of this arrangement before it has been officially announced to the company or the other directors. Therefore, what this letter indicates is that these individuals were acting as a small group in a sense ‘outside’ of their organizations, as almost a separate entity to the corporations for which they worked. They were acting in many respects on a meta level, above the formalities of board meetings, outside the confines of shareholders, and in a collusive manner behind the backs of individuals they felt were not within the group (Lynch, for example). Given that this decision was of great significance to the fate and success of both firms, these two individuals clearly wielded a great deal of tacit but effective power, functioning behind the scenes.

These letters thus indicate an ongoing practice of companies associated with the Oppenheims. This practice involves a sort of *de facto* amalgamation through mutually beneficial deals and cooperation, with the longer-term aim of *de jure* amalgamation. Three such cases can be gleaned from the literature (see Gregory, 1962; Innes, 1984), the first being the Dunkelsbuhlers integrating

with the CMSC in 1905, the CMSC integrating with the Coal Trust in 1916, and the CMSC integrating with the CMIC in 1917. This may partly be explained by the nature of the gold market at the time. As gold acted as the prime money-commodity (through the gold standard for currencies), there was an unlimited market for gold. This factor in turn reduced the role which competition played in the industry, as capitalists did not need to compete with one another in terms of pricing. Competition did still exist in terms of securing access to gold-bearing ground as well as concerning labour, but companies could not outprice one another. Thus, there was no limitation placed on production, the only limitation being the ability of companies to find sufficient capital to finance production, as well as some issues with rising costs of production during the first world war (between 1914 and 1918 working costs increased by 28%). Although these mining-finance houses were all separate companies, the tendency was to collude together to make investment more attractive to investors by spreading risk. This was part of the rise of the group system (see Innes, 1984: 54), and this is what was occurring in these letters.

So what do these letters indicate about Randlordism? They mark the beginning of this transition. While Phillips does feature in this activity and both men are closely linked with him (Milner as his private secretary, Kitzinger as his senior administrator in the CMIC), the decisions and activities of consequence for the CMIC have been carried over to the administrators of Kitzinger and Milner, who undergird Phillips and have a high degree of independence in their conduct. Phillips and the majority of the Randlords were financiers and mining developers, and during the early and mid-time periods on the Rand were faced with basic entrepreneurial problems and opportunities. Central to these challenges was risk-taking, which involved both the ability to assess investment opportunity and the willingness to risk capital in the anticipation of profit. On the Witwatersrand, both total investment and the risk of losing it were very great. The best mines yielded high profits from the outset, but at the same time large investments were wasted through unwise speculation and bad planning (Fraser and Jeeves, 1977: 6). This new era was marked by risk management during the period of 1913-1932 when fresh capital in the industry was limited. This indicates that Randlordism was highly context dependent. The activities of the Randlords as a figuration depended on uncertainty, risk, inefficiency, and older styles of control and management.

The activities of Kitzinger and Milner further indicate that the activities of these corporations increasingly became backstage activities and became intra-organizational due to the way in which risk was managed. This led to a form of interdependency or mutual dependency between individuals and corporations which was mutually beneficial. Phillips as a Randlord required the activities of senior administrators Kitzinger and Milner to do the ground work, while Kitzinger and Milner required the leeway afforded by Phillips to act in the ways they did. On a company

level, the change was from a zero to a non-zero-sum game, whereby cooperation was mutually beneficial, leading to greater interconnectedness and interdependency.

POST-TEXT

What arose directly from these negotiations remains unknown, as neither the literature nor the papers of the CMIC provides an indication of what occurred. However, a scribbled note on one of the copies of the agreement by Kitzing and dated 30 April 1917 seems to indicate that the agreement fell through, but it is not known whether it was re-negotiated. The lack of sources is likely not due to them simply being missing, but because such post-text developments are usually not documented. What is in the collection is what someone in the past considered 'relevant', while these post-text non-events may not have been considered important. In addition, the way in which these negotiations occurred was largely behind the scenes and not part of the official history of the company or the individuals.

In 1919, however, Ernest Oppenheimer announced at an annual meeting of the Anglo-American Corporation that he had been in a reciprocal agreement with the CMSC before Anglo was formed, whereby he had the right to participate to the extent of 50% during a period of seven years from 8 June 1917, in any gold mining-interests acquired by the CMSC (Gregory, 1962: 83). Shortly after these letters were written, Anglo-American was founded on 25 September 1917. In 1918, Oppenheimer became the resident director of the CMSC in Johannesburg.

SUCCEEDING CONTEXT

The process of *de facto* amalgamation through collusion witnessed by these letters helps explain how the Oppenheimer companies were able to gain a foothold in the richest gold area in the Witwatersrand, from which they could launch further expansion. There is a broad body of literature which argues that the diffusion of ownership which has accompanied the historical rise of large public corporations has been accompanied by an inevitable dilution of corporate control (Fraser and Jeeves, 1977: 6). Furthermore, some versions of this thesis claim that under monopoly capitalism 'ownership' and 'control' were separated from one another, leading to a situation in which a 'managerial class' emerged in control of company operations (Innes, 1984: 230).

The Randlord figuration and the conditions where individual Randlords could practice their serial entrepreneurship and exert influence in politics, economic affairs and even warfare, died out with the rise of rational business and the managerial class. Armies of accountants, administrators and managers replaced the rogue figures of the Randlords, who exerted their influence broadly in the open frontiers of new countries and their emerging economies and industries. The highly centralized control of the old style focused around personalities and personal links and was replaced by a highly decentralized power structure, and complex networks of cross-holdings

through which each company held only a minority share in each of its partners. Unlike the Randlords, who held majority shares of their respective groups and wielded great personal control and power, the Oppenheimers, a new neo-Randlord type, held only a minority share in companies, limiting the amount of direct control they could exert. The type of power and control this new grouping exerted seems to have been more subtle within these new organizational forms.

The Anglo-American Group of companies remain a major force to this day in the economic, political and social life of South Africa. In virtually every major sphere of mining, financial and industrial activity, Anglo crops up either as the dominant presence, such as in gold, diamond and other mineral mining, or at least as an important influence (Innes, 1984: 13). Since its inception the Anglo Group has been closely identified with subsequent generations of the Oppenheimer family. Anton Dunkelsbuhler, the Group's founder, was the uncle of both Ernest and Louis Oppenheimer, the two brother who played such a crucial role in the Group's formative years. Ernest's son Harry followed his father as chairman and today Harry's son Nicholas is an important figure in the Group as is Harry's former son-in-law, Gordon Waddell.

Phillips's rise as a Randlord can largely be attributed to his associations with Beit, Wernher, and the Corner House. In 1889 Beit offered him a job on the Rand as a general adviser in mining matters at £2,500 a year and 10% of the profits from one mine which he would oversee. Then in 1893, with the sudden death of Hermann Eckstein, Phillips succeeded him as head of the most powerful mining house on the Rand and as president of the Chamber of Mines, which office he held from 1893 to 1896, and from 1908 to 1909. After being shot and nearly killed in 1913, Phillips returned to London to become chairman of the CMIC (Wheatcroft, 1985). Phillips resigned from the CMIC in 1924 at the age of 69. His younger son (Frank) was a businessman and the chairman of Central Mining from 1934 to 1942, when he suddenly died.³⁸

HONNET TO PHILLIPS, 1922

Box 6, file 1, of the CMIC Papers contains a 15 June 1921 letter from Max Honnet of the Argus Publishing Company to Lionel Phillips, regarding the incorporation of Southern Rhodesia into the Union of South Africa. It discusses the potential use of the Argus Press to influence the vote about this, whether it should be incorporated, and how this might be achieved. Honnet also encloses memoranda on the political situation in Southern Rhodesia from John Martin, General Manager of the Argus Company; R.H. Douglas, Editor of the *Rhodesia Herald*; A. Harrington, Editor of the *Bulawayo Chronicle*, and H.S. Hodges, Manager of the Argus Printing and Publishing Co. Ltd., Bulawayo (all in Appendix 8). These documents provide a glimpse into the

³⁸ <http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxy.is.ed.ac.uk/view/article/39343?docPos=1>

way in which Lionel Phillips and Abe Bailey attempted to engineer a press campaign to influence public opinion in favour of Union. While this failed, it does provide an insight into the resources the Randlords could marshal if they made any attempt to influence events. Importantly, it also indicates the way in which Lionel Phillips was connected with specific groups and individuals, and how this played out in this instance.

CONTEXT

The Argus Publishing Company (APC), with which Honnet was associated, was one of the two most powerful press groups in South Africa in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, along with the South African Associated Press. The *Cape Argus* was the APC's standard-bearer and mining interests were the major shareholders. In 1926, for example, the major shareholders were the CMIC with a 34% stake, and Johannesburg Consolidated Investments with a 20% stake. A number of Randlords also owned personal stakes: Otto Beit held 9%, the Joel family 9% and J.B. Robinson 5%. Until 1931, all the directors of the Argus Group were drawn from the CMIC, Rand Mines Group and Johannesburg Consolidated Investments (Horwitz, 2001: 37-38).

Many individuals active during the period of interest, and also commentators now, agree that there was a 'kept' press in South Africa under the control of either capitalist owners, largely in the form of the Rhodes matrix, or the Corner House Group, or imperial officials. Yet questions remain regarding how it was 'kept', how it was manipulated, and whether it had any determining influence on opinions and events. The following discussion concerns an attempt to influence the press and through this public opinion.

Until 1922, it was widely viewed as inevitable that Southern Rhodesia would become the fifth Province in the Union of South Africa. Rhodes saw the destiny of Rhodesia as lying ultimately in a unified Southern Africa (Warhurst, 1971: 93), while successive Secretaries of State (Bonar Law, Walter Long and Alfred Milner) had regarded Responsible Government as unlikely and undesirable, although Jan Smuts (at the time Prime Minister of the Union) sought to ensure his political survival through Southern Rhodesia's early entry into the Union (Lowry, 1997: 26), and provision had earlier been made (also by Smuts) in the South Africa Act of 1909 for its possible future admission. All indications pointed to the inclusion of Rhodesia within the South African Union. Yet, in the Referendum held in October 1922, the 35,000 white Rhodesians to whom the vote was administered (excluding the 850,000 black Rhodesians), voted a resounding 'No' and chose self-governance (though subject to certain limitations), despite considerable opposition (Lee, 1977: 72; Mackenzie, 1978: 24; Palley, 1966: 207). This was a significant turning-point in Southern Rhodesian and Southern African history more generally, setting the territory on a (semi) autonomous course (Lowry, 1997: 260).

The electorate had a choice between extending British South African Company administration, integrating the territory into the Union of South Africa, or self-governance (Lee, 1977: 72). Each of the voting options were to the benefit or detriment of different groups. Mining groups such as the CMIC sought inclusion into the Union;³⁹ the Rhodesian League, and the predominantly farming community it represented, viewed responsible government as the only means to change land titles and mining laws which gave prospectors and miners considerable rights on privately owned land (Lee, 1977: 72). In addition, there was concern about an influx of ‘poor white’ settlers, a loss of labour because of the higher-paying Rand mines, fear of Afrikaner nationalism, and the higher income tax rates in South Africa (Lee, 1966: 77; Mackenzie, 1978: 35-36).

The white worker population tended to vote for Responsible Government as their wages were 10% higher than in South Africa, and importantly, an estimated 75% of Rhodesian women voted for Responsible Government, including some whose husbands had voted for Union (Lowry, 1997: 261). Women had been enfranchised in Rhodesia in 1919, adding 3467 new voters, who largely supported Responsible Government because women did not have the vote in the Union, because of imperialist sentiment and anti-Afrikaner feeling, and because of a moral panic concerning a so-called ‘black peril’ (Lowry, 1997: 261; McCulloch, 2000). Milner favoured Union and wanted to delay a referendum until a change in the South African political situation occurred, namely for Smuts to strengthen his party’s position through a merger with the Unionists. Milner also believed that the influx of new settlers into Rhodesia, who he saw as not prejudiced about Union, would buoy the Unionist vote (Chanock, 1977: 148).

PRE-TEXT

Max Honnet wrote a letter to Lionel Phillips in June 1921, more than a year before the referendum, though its antecedents were much earlier. In it, Honnet indicates that Abe Bailey had approached him “some while ago” (line 6), and it must have taken time for Honnet to contact and receive memoranda from John Martin, R.H. Douglas, A. Harrington and H.S. Hodges. The letter arose out of Honnet’s concern, not so much about the use of the *Argus* to influence public opinion, as the overt and forceful approach Bailey wanted to take. Honnet saw Bailey as out of touch with the public – “I told him” (line 9) – and that such an approach would fly in the face of public opinion and ultimately damage both the newspaper and a pro-Union campaign. Honnet did however believe that the *Argus* could help in a campaign, but in more subtle and responsive ways. However, Honnet was in a predicament. As Bailey was his superior, he could not flatly deny

³⁹ The BSAC was mainly concerned to protect the interests of its shareholders, who only received their first dividend in 1924, 35 years after the Company’s incorporation. Then in 1918 the Privy Council pronounced that the lands of Southern Rhodesia were vested in the Crown (Mackenzie, 1978: 24; Palley, 1966: 196). Without a financial incentive, the BSAC was no longer prepared to incur administrative expenditure and it therefore favoured Rhodesian entry into the Union, as the Directors hoped for more generous compensation than from the British Treasury (Palley, 1966: 196).

Bailey's "persistent requests" (line 19), and Bailey seemed determined to get his way. To stop Bailey, Honnet directs effort to convincing Lionel Phillips to follow his own approach, as Phillips might be able to convince Bailey. To convince Phillips, Honnet sets out to build a convincing case by drawing on the opinions of those in the know. Instead of sending the memoranda to Bailey, Honnet requests that Phillips reads the memoranda and himself discusses the matter with Bailey.

THE TEXT

1 **Argus**

15th June 1921

2 Storage case 138

[stamped] CPMRLS

3 Sir Lionel Phillips, Bart.,

Rhodesia

4 1, London Wall Buildings

5 Dear Sir Lionel,

6 Some while ago Sir Abe Bailey approached me, in the absence of Sir Evelyn Wallers, on the subject of
 7 incorporation of Rhodesia in the Union. He urged the view strongly that in order to consolidate the Smuts
 8 majority, Rhodesia ought to be brought into the Union as soon as possible, and as a means to this end
 9 suggested a campaign for incorporation on the part of our (Argus) newspapers in Rhodesia. I told him at
 10 the time that I was by no means sure that public opinion in Rhodesia was favourable to the amalgamation
 11 with the Union – in fact, I believed a desire for responsible government was more evident. I pointed out
 12 also that our newspapers could not very well fly in the face of local public opinion, and that altogether it
 13 seemed to me to be inadvisable, and likely to do more harm than good, for the newspapers to suddenly
 14 embark upon a pronounced pro-union campaign. I further expressed the view that our newspapers could
 15 and would help, but their influence would have to be exercised in a gradual and almost imperceptible
 16 manner, taking advantage of occasions when public opinion would be amenable. Sir Abe gave me the
 17 impression that he was not altogether satisfied with the attitude I had taken up. He seemed to think that
 18 there was nothing to prevent our newspapers coming out into the open and beating the big drum for Union,
 19 and persistently requested that we should instruct the newspapers accordingly. I said the matter would be
 20 given further consideration, and we left it at that.

21 Subsequently, in order to get authoritative first-hand information upon the subject, I asked Martin, the
 22 General manager of the Argus Company, to get from our editors in Rhodesia their written views on the
 23 subject generally, and their answers to certain definite questions which Martin and I framed. These have
 24 now come to hand in the shape of memoranda by Mr. Douglas, Editor, Rhodesia Herald (Salisbury), by Mr.
 25 Harrington, Editor, Bulawayo Chronicle, and a further memorandum by Mr. Hodges, manager, Argus
 26 Company, Bulawayo; these three covered by a further memorandum by Martin himself, containing his own
 27 views and stating what he considers to be the correct attitude of the newspapers.

28 That Rhodesia will eventually be merged into the Union, I think, is a certainty, but at this stage it appears
29 that the fusion will not come about except via the intermediate stage of responsible government, and I must
30 say that I agree entirely with Martin as to the attitude our Rhodesia papers should adopt.

31 I know that you yourself will be much interested in this question, and as Sir Abe Bailey is now on your side
32 you may care to discuss with him the situation as disclosed by the attached memoranda, which I hope will
33 serve to convince him that no good can come from attempting to rush matters but bringing premature
34 influence to bare, either in the Union or in Rhodesia itself.

35 With kind regards,

36 I remain,

37 Yours sincerely,

38 (Sgd.) Max Honnet.

39 Ps. I should be grateful for an expression of views (Sgd) Honnet.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Line 39 was handwritten.

ANALYSIS

Honnet's letter begins by describing the reason for a newspaper campaign for incorporation and that "Sir Abe Bailey approached me, in the absence of Sir Evelyn Wallers... to consolidate the Smuts majority, Rhodesia ought to be brought into the Union... [and] suggested a campaign for incorporation on the part of our [Argus] newspapers in Rhodesia" (Lines 6-9). Here Honnet demarcates particular individuals: he was approached by Abe Bailey, he sees it necessary to mention that this was in the absence of Evelyn Wallers, and he then describes what occurred in his letter to Lionel Phillips.

Abe Bailey (1864 – 1940) was at the time a director of the CMIC, as was Evelyn Wallers. Bailey was a South African born Randlord (Kubicek, 1979; Wheatcroft, 1985; Fraser, 2006; Murray, 2008: 384) whose business importance had largely come about through his connection with Rhodes (Murray, 2008: 384). Following Rhodes, Bailey shared in the ventures of the BSAC, and after Rhodes's death he began the process of acquiring a vast ranch in Rhodesia, Rhodesdale. He became the largest single holder of land and mining properties in Rhodesia. Bailey was also significantly involved in newspapers, having purchased the *Rand Daily Mail* in 1904, and in 1906 he was the primary shareholder in a syndicate that launched the *Sunday Times* (Murray, 2008: 384). Sir Evelyn Wallers was an employee and administrator and not a Randlord. He joined the staff of Eckstein in 1897, was later appointed local manager of the CMIC in 1911 and Resident director in 1918. He was the president of the Rhodesian Chamber of Mines variously in 1914, 1916-1919, and 1924 (Bell, 1991). He was also a director of the Argus Company at the time this letter was written.

In his letter, Honnet implies that the *Argus* was controlled by Phillips, Wallers and Bailey, in the sense that the position the newspaper(s) took was largely at their discretion. It was however only Bailey who was actively pressing for a press campaign. Bailey clearly thought the press was able and likely to influence public opinion, in order to "consolidate the Smut's majority" (line 7-8). Bailey's interest in doing so was linked to his position as a Randlord, in being the chairman of the South African Townships, Mining and Finance Corporation, the London and Rhodesian Mining and Land Company, one of the largest holders of land and mining properties in Rhodesia, a director of the CMIC, and he also took a keen interest in Rhodesia as a result of his connections with Rhodes's BSAC.

Bailey's reason for wanting to bring Rhodesia into the Union was to "consolidate the Smuts majority" (line 7-8). His motivation for a press campaign thus appears to not be entirely concerned with Rhodesia, but rather with perpetuating the Jan Smuts government in South Africa. This seems to indicate that there were wider configurations of interests of a more political kind, in which Smuts and Bailey were both elements.

Bailey wanted to stop the rise of the National Party (NP). Founded in 1914 by Afrikaner Nationalists, its origin was rooted in disagreements between at the time Prime Minister Louis Botha and his Minister of Education, J.B.M Hertzog, an influential political figure among Afrikaners. Hertzog and the National Party pushed a 'two stream policy' – two nationalities flowing in parallel channels of cultural and national development – in contradiction of Botha's 'one stream' policy to merge the two white 'races' into one people, the object of Union. Bailey's concerns were well-founded: Afrikaner Nationalism was on the rise, and in the 1920 South African general election the NP won the largest number of seats, though not a majority.

This indicates complex internal dynamics among interconnected individuals. While these individuals were linked through the *Argus*, their external networks led them to see the Argus company as a tool for differing goals. Bailey viewed the *Argus*, and his control over newspapers in Rhodesia, as an opportunity to protect British interests and promote the Union of South of South Africa.⁴¹ Bailey had also been elected in 1915 to the South African parliament as an independent representing Krugersdorp, but sitting with Botha's South African Party and not with the Unionists as expected.⁴² Rhodesia joining the Union was therefore firmly in Bailey's political interest and of the figurations into which he was interwoven. As a Milnerite, a supporter of the Kindergarden (he was a generous contributor to the Round Table movement), and a significant press lord, it is understandable that Bailey would draw on his networks and actively work to support them.

POST-TEXT AND SUCCEEDING CONTEXT

Ultimately the press campaign failed to influence public views, with the majority voting for self-governance. In addition, Bailey's worries were accurate. In the General Election of 1924, the NP defeated the South African Party under Smuts and formed a coalition government with the South African Labour Party, which became known as the Pact Government. Bailey also lost his place in South African parliament.

The Honnet letter concerns a micro-event, though linked to a macro event, that tells much about Randlordism and its figural activities at the time. While Randlords often shared financial interests through the corporations they controlled, they often had differing political interests based on other associations. Differing associations and political goals limited the degree to which they were a unified group and would act in unison. The figuration is not necessarily unitary and can contain differing interests and resulting conflicts, and also those on the peripheries as well as at

⁴¹ Bailey actively promoted Union, helping to finance *The State*, the quarterly magazine of the Closer Union Society. The first issue carried messages of support from prominent politicians across the spectrum including John X. Merriman, F. S. Malan, Louis Botha, George Farrar, Abraham Fischer and Jan Smuts.
<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/30521>; Dubow, 1976: 70).

⁴² <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/30521>

the core can play an important part. In this case, differing political goals held Bailey back from influencing wider social events, and internal group dynamics short-circuited Bailey's wishes. Also, Bailey's attempts were met by the 'outside world'. Democratic processes limit the degree to which elites can control outcomes. The 'best case' scenario for Bailey was influencing ideas and voting. This indicates the limits of the power that he had, and that he was very much interdependent with the networks he was part of and which checked his actions.

SOME CONCLUSIONS ON RANDLORDISM

The rise of some of the most important Randlords, including Wernher, Beit, Eckstein, Taylor, Bailey and Phillips, can be attributed in part to their association with Jules Porgés. Porgés created the platform from which it was possible for these men to rise, the capital required, the networks, and the social positions which they came to hold. They were seen to have certain desirable characteristics or perceived abilities and strong business or finance connections. As a result, they were given positions and opportunities, which they cultivated over time to attain positions of influence. During the early stages, the relationship between these individuals appears to have the character more of a business group or network than a figuration. This may be because it took time for these individuals to find their place, to develop their respective groups and develop the configurations of linked people into something resembling figuration. The development of these figurational aspects and their effects can be seen from the letters analysed in this chapter, with each letter providing insights into different aspects of Randlordism.

The letter from George Albu to Julius Wernher in November 1894 was primarily focused on two complaints that Albu had against Wernher. The first has to do with the management of shares in a pool shared by Beit, Wernher and the Albus by which they artificially raised the price and volume of shares in lower grade mines, and once the pool closed, some of the shares went to Wernher & co. when Albu thought it was his firm's shares. Here Albu was essentially trying to push Wernher to give shares Albu owned back, and to cooperate in the pooling system to avoid a bank interfering with 'their market'. The second complaint has to do with Albu being unhappy with Wernher cooperating with Goerz in another pool, partly because Albu was not included in the group in terms of information or activities; he was not aware of this pool and was not up-to-date with the number of shares Goerz and Albu had. He thought pooling could damage the reputation of the mine and affect his ability to manage shares and their prices and that financial methods aimed at distorting pricing was not necessary for a quality mine such as the Mayor and Charlton.

These issues must have been very important to Albu, as he adopts a number of ways to influence Wernher, the first in the formal part of the letter, and two others in the P.S. The first was by assertively informing Wernher that he expects the end of the pool with Goerz. The second was a claim to authority. Albu mentions that Hamilton Smith, a highly respected mining engineer, believed the mine to be of great value; the third attempt was a claim to Albu and Wernher's personal relationship. Albu shares 'insider' information to reinforce and reiterate their personal relationship, and then shares some more personal information of his own actions to show that Albu is working with and open with Wernher, hoping Wernher would do the same. Albu is thus making an earnest effort to influence Wernher and takes these events very seriously.

The reason for this is that the business activities of Wernher affect Albu's financial success. Albu needs Wernher's cooperation over those of other business interests and business partners. There was as such an interdependency between Wernher and Albu, though the balance was firmly in Wernher's favour. They worked together in certain pools to inflate prices, and this relationship was partly based on trust, cooperation and a buddy system. Albu to a degree relied on this system and relationship he had with Wernher, and thought Wernher had broken this unstated contract by not acting in Albu's interests.

Albu and Wernher thus shared multiple linkages, in terms of business, history, and a personal relationship. Their relationship extended to multiple individuals and what can be glimpsed is a figuration involving mutually-oriented, cooperating individuals, sharing information, sharing personal lives, working together in business, but where cooperation was complex and often contested. Notably, this system of working together kept others out, while increasing the bonds between these men and companies. And it was precisely these smaller events of a day-to-day character which either maintained and strengthened groups in figurational directions, or else created networks of individuals without much sense of group solidarity.

The 1907 letter involving Cregoe is very much to do with the way in which groups of individuals joined together in corporations, were able to cut others out of the Rand and monopolise its resources for themselves. This concerned a legal conflict between Wernher, Beit and Co., and W.B. Shurmer and Cregoe, regarding mining rights on a property. Wernher, Beit and Co. backed the original owner, likely by financial rewards, to support their case. The Barnato Group was linked to a larger syndicate originally backing Shurmer and Co. in the hope that, by financially rewarding him, they would be rewarded with the mining ground. Ultimately, Wernher, Beit won the case, largely thanks to supporting the original owner of the land, and Shurmer and Co. not originally having the finances to renew the lease.

This letter shows one of the means through which the Wernher, Beit and Co. gained control of some of the richest land on the east Rand, and thus provides insight into how a small group of

people and companies were able to monopolise the gold mining industry. The changes which the Randlords were involved in were clearly quite rapid. Areas of land worth inordinate amounts fell under the control of small groups of men in relatively short periods of time. A defining feature of this change was a degree of ruthlessness; those companies and people who lost in these disputes were often forced to default and were absorbed; the individuals who controlled them disappeared in the pages of history. Shurmer was ultimately forced into silence, with this letter being one of his final attempts to change the course of things.

The next letters are a covering letter dated May 1917 and an attachment, dated April 1917. The covering letter is from Kitzinger, a managing director of the CMIC, to Milner, a director and administrator of the Consolidated Mines Selection Company and private secretary to Lionel Phillips. The purpose is to return the attached letter to Milner, as the business agreement it concerns was unsuccessful, although the two companies reached a similar agreement shortly after. The letters are part of an ongoing correspondence between these two individuals, concerned with closer business relations between the CMIC and the CMSC. The agreement stipulated that each company would have a stake (30%) in all financial transactions on the far east rand, and seats on the boards of directors for mines jointly owned by proportionate representation.

My interest here concerns the relationship between these companies and the changing business environment, and so the changing role of the Randlords. Both Milner and Kitzinger were closely associated with Phillips, yet were serving competing companies. This indicates an interlocking of directorships and interests between the companies, and the letter indicates that the directors of the two companies knew each other well and had interpersonal relationships.

In addition, the closer relationship these companies were seeking was a fairly common practice of the Oppenheimer companies, as seen by the way in which they formed the CMSC, and also of companies that succeeded on the Rand more generally. This *de facto* amalgamation through mutually beneficial deals and cooperation, with the longer-term aim of *de jure* amalgamation, was prevalent at the time and came to be known as the Group System. The aim was to collude to make investment more attractive to investors by spreading risk. This shows a practice of the Randlords and the companies which they controlled, whereby there was a system between those who had reached a level of financial success and company size, to support each other. This created the major advantage of being in this group, and essentially blocked out the possibility of others successfully entering the gold industry.

The way in which Milner and Kitzinger were enacting decisions of consequence for Phillips is also important. Some key responsibilities of the Randlords had begun to be taken over by managers and administrators. This was further accelerated by the growing complexity of the gold mining industry driven by the size of these corporations and the increasing need for a division of

labour in management and decision-making. The change was from the rogue figures of the earlier Randlords, who exerted their influence broadly in the open frontiers of new countries and their economies and industries. The highly centralized control of the old style, focused around personalities and figurational links, was replaced by a decentralized power structure, and complex networks of cross-holdings through which each company held only a minority share in each of its partners. Unlike the Randlords, who held majority shares of their respective groups and wielded great control and power, the Oppenheimers, a new neo-Randlord type, held only a minority share in companies, limiting the amount of direct control they could exert. The type of power and control that this new group exerted was subtler and within these new organizational forms. This change in the nature of business practice led to the rise of a professional managerial class, eventually superseding the centralized social positions which Randlords had held in the past.

Max Honnet's letter in June 1921 to Lionel Phillips concerns Abe Bailey wanting to use his position as owner of the major newspaper in Rhodesia to influence public opinion in favour of incorporation into South Africa. Honnet, lower down the hierarchy, believed that such an explicit approach would not work. But Bailey still continued to push for an explicit propaganda campaign in favour of Union, and being Bailey's subordinate, Honnet could not openly reject Bailey's wishes. To get around this, he got the Argus editors in Rhodesia to give their opinions on the matter, which agreed with his, and wrote to Phillips, a more senior director of the Argus Company, outlining the situation. Honnet hoped that Phillips would persuade Bailey, so that indirectly Honnet could stop Bailey.

The Randlords Bailey and Phillips had control over a national newspaper, often viewed as a powerful form of social persuasion or even manipulation because of the way in which newspapers could influence popular beliefs. Bailey believed this to be true and that his newspaper could impact on the course of events. Yet, this was not the reality, and a senior administrator had to find a way to temper Bailey's proposal. Honnet's approach recognised that Bailey was part of a complex network of individuals with whom he was very much interdependent, and who worked together to hold him back.

While the Randlords shared financial interests through the corporations they controlled, they often had differing political interests connected with their other associations and figurations. Such differences limited the degree to which they were a unified group and could influence social change. In this case, differing political goals held Bailey back from trying to influence wider social events, because internal group dynamics and opposing views short-circuited Bailey's wishes. Bailey's proposal was met by political realities and the senior administrators.

Overall, what these letters from the papers of the CMIC have shown is that the Randlords concerned associated in different ways with the CMIC. They were part of a chain of people,

capital and resources, stretching from the Rothschilds who funded Porgés, Porgés who funded Wernher, Beit, followed by the Oppenheimers who rose on these structures created before them. These letters have also shown some of the ways in which the Randlords at the height of the gold and diamond industry worked together and were interdependent, and this increased over time. The fact that they were part of the same class, attended the same events, social clubs etc. meant that they also often shared personal relationships which bonded them close together and reinforced the chains of interdependency between them. These advantages of being at the top meant that the Randlords were able to keep others out through manipulation and legal means, another aspect with distinct figurational characteristics.

These letters have also shown just how complicated all of these things were, and that they cannot be reduced to general rules. Indeed, they also indicate that the context in which the Randlords operated changed fairly rapidly over time, and they had to react to change and not just be the drivers of it. What can be seen therefore are tendencies, and these tendencies take the form of processes over time, something which analysing the letters over-time and chronologically has shown. Indeed, perhaps the most important aspect is that, while these Randlords attempted to influence a range of different events, the degree to which they could or could not varied, largely because political, economic and social motivations differed from Randlord to Randlord. A figuration involving the bonds of affect, as with George Farrar's association with the Milnerite figuration, does not seem to have existed here. The Randlords associated with the CMIC certainly shared company interests, but their lack of political unity and close bonds made this a largely financial association between individuals, but one which had some marked figurational characteristics as well.

The chains of activity and connection which led these men to attain positions of power can largely be attributed to a number of features. They were selected. Wernher, Beit and Phillips gained traction in the industry thanks to being selected by people already established within the industry. The Randlords associated with the CMIC were brought into an economic unit that was successful, perhaps mainly because those who were already in strong positions were good at selecting competent associates. What all these men shared, in addition, was strong financial backing. Without these links it would have not been possible to enter and succeed in a capital intensive industry. What they actually did when in established positions of power differed between them. Wernher, Beit were largely interested in business and had few larger political goals. Bailey, however, stands out as a Randlord associated with the CMIC who *did* have clear political motivations and goals – and also a fairly close association with Farrar. Lionel Phillips was to a significant extent a transitional figure in this, with his career as a Randlord starting in the 1890s, followed by his association with Rhodes and around the Jameson Raid as well as heading the Johannesburg Chamber of Mines. Later, his career shifted towards key directorships in key

corporations in the 1920s. There are some signs of allegiance to him and recognition of his standing, as I have intimated, but while it would have been interesting to investigate these further, no Phillips archive exists to enable this.

Clearly there were temporal issues and changes over time. This chapter has looked at letters in chronological order, stretching from 1894 until 1922, and has related these to developments over time in the organisation of the mining industry and the corporations that came to dominate it. It has also tried to draw links between events and the Randlords as a figuration, either in them creating such events, or how they reacted to events. There were changes over time in both what it was to become and to be a Randlord. And although harder to pin down, there also seem to have been changes in the character of the figurational components of Randlordism, with the earlier lineage of close ties of affect based on a shared political vision (something that also existed regarding Rhodes, as many commentators have indicated) shifting later to looser connections based more on material and business considerations.

In Chapter 5, the focus turns to what I have termed the Milnerite figuration and how this connects with other associations with figurational characteristics, in particular the Randlords. In exploring this, various of the points about connections between Randlords and figurations discussed in this chapter will be further explored.

CHAPTER 5: FIGURATIONAL DYNAMICS AND INTERSECTIONS: THE MILNERITE, RANDLORD, ROTHSCHILD AND FINANCE FIGURATIONS

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 3 discussed how George Farrar's ability to influence events was closely related to his relationship with Alfred Milner, who provided Farrar with access to positions where he could at least potentially do so. This analysis provided glimpses into the 'how', 'what' and 'why', and suggested that figurational dynamics played a major part. Importantly, this figurational aspect cohered around the figure of Alfred Milner and his project in South Africa, which was somewhat different from the more cautious formal British Imperial project, although there were obviously many overlaps. Relatedly, it is well documented that Milner surrounded himself with young acolytes, a grouping which came to be known as the 'Kindergarden', younger men who served under Milner in various administrative positions in the colonial civil service (Dubow, 1997). However, these acolytes were one aspect of a larger figuration around Milner, with discussion in this present chapter exploring this in-depth together with its intersections with key figures in a number of other con/figurations.

The figuration around Milner was composed of individuals with shared concerns, affect and wider aspirations and included men of more substance in political and economic terms, including Farrar but others as well. The analysis, discussed in Chapter 3, of the Lawley dinner document provided a tantalising glimpse of this Milnerite figuration in its terminal phase. The occasion had a powerful undertone, with Farrar bringing a group of men together who had once shared a common purpose. This was of both individual and group interests and involved an emotional and ideological bond between them and Milner. The report of the dinner speeches describes them as discussing achievements and failures in relation to unspoken underlying shared views and purpose. The culmination in sending an emotive collective message to Milner indicates a past time when the figuration stood strong, with the message harking back to former times and circumstances.

The bond expressed was to the British Empire, but it was also more than this, personified symbolically by the connection of many at the dinner with Milner and his interpretation of the imperial project in South Africa and the Transvaal specifically. Farrar's sense of purpose and identity largely arose from this figuration. His business activities did not directly coincide with who he associated politically with. These were largely separate groupings whose purposes and bonds of connection differed. And while they may have overlapped in cases, the individuals that

Farrar became most closely associated with involved matters of identity and shared interests and the connections were figurational ones.

Chapter 4 explored another type of association – a figuration or not? – concerning some of the most important Randlords, including Wernher, Beit, Eckstein, Taylor, Bailey and Phillips, which can be attributed in significant part to their initial association with Jules Porgés. Initially, the relationship between these men appears to have the character more of a business group or network than a figuration. They often worked together towards short-term business goals but differed greatly on political matters. Wernher, Beit were largely interested in business finance and had few larger political aims, perhaps due to their nationality, perhaps their particular interests. Abe Bailey, however, stands out as a Randlord associated with the CMIC who did have clear political motivations, and who also had an association with Farrar. Nonetheless, these men were part of a chain linked to capital and resources, stretching from the Rothschilds who funded Porgés, Porgés who funded Wernher, Beit, followed by the Oppenheims who took over these structures that had been created before their arrival and participation in the figuration or association. All these men often worked together and supported each other, even when in economic competition. But a figuration in the stronger sense of Farrar's association with Milner and those around Milner does not seem to have existed here in general terms. These Randlords were all associated with the CMIC's shared interests, but beyond this their lack of political unity, bonds of close affect and shared long-term goals made this an instrumental association between them but with some strong figurational aspects. 'The Randlords' can then be seen as a kind of quasi-figuration, or rather as operating as a figuration in particular circumstances.

From this analysis, it is clear there were strong figurational effects around Milner. These figurational aspects are largely discernible during and after the South African War (1899-1902), in particular after the death of Cecil Rhodes in 1902, with Rhodes of course often associated with figurational allegiances, including with Milner as part of this. Thus, it appears possible that the mantle of a specifically southern African imperial project might have been in a sense handed on from Rhodes to Milner, with Abe Bailey and Percy Fitzpatrick, two prominent Randlords, part of this. The Papers of Alfred Milner (MSS. Milner dep. 1-698) in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, contain significant numbers of letters between Milner and quite a number of Randlords, including those on par with Milner such as Cecil Rhodes, Alfred Beit and Nathan Rothschild, as well as other Randlords such as Julius Wernher, Abe Bailey, Percy Fitzpatrick and George Farrar. Therefore this chapter investigates the extant letters from each of these men to Milner, with the focus being letters to Milner and any copies of Milner's to them that indicate shared concerns, mutual bonds of affect and aspiration, or indeed conflicts regarding any of these.

Discussion starts with the letters from Rhodes to Milner. This relationship antedates Milner's connections with the others, the significance of their relationship to the course of South African

history is undoubted, and coupled with this the similarity of their vision for South Africa and southern Africa more generally is notable. They both filled central positions in South African society from 1897, when Milner arrived in South Africa, until Rhodes's death in 1902. Milner was a trustee of the Rhodes Trust between 1902 and 1925 and its Chairman from 1917, and he was thus in a sense an heir of the figuration that Rhodes produced. What follows explores this further, with the caution that this is in so far as can be gauged from the remaining extant letters in this particular collection.

RHODES'S LETTERS TO MILNER

THE CONTEXT

The Papers of Alfred Milner contain numerous letters and papers between Milner and Rhodes, as well as documents relating to Rhodes. In the case of the latter, it contains over 2500 items relating to the Rhodes Trust. In the case of letters, there are 33 items, 13 of which are letters from Rhodes to Milner. These stretch from 1893 to January 1902, roughly from Rhodes sealing his monopoly over the diamond industry (around 1890) to his death in March 1902. Many were in a literal sense written by Philip Jourdan, Rhodes's primary secretary for a lengthy period who penned many of his letters, or perhaps by one of his other secretaries.

Rhodes and Milner first came in contact regarding a territorial dispute regarding Bechuanaland (the future Botswana) between the British Government and the Transvaal. Milner, Stead, and the *Pall Mall Gazette* (for which newspaper Stead was the editor, and Milner worked at the time) allied themselves with Rev John Mackenzie, a London Missionary Society missionary who campaigned in Britain against ceding the territory to the Transvaal, arguing it was key to the interior and to political supremacy in Southern Africa. Rhodes became engaged in this debate, through which he and Milner came in contact, although it was Stead who introduced the two when Rhodes was in London organising press and government support for a royal charter to run what became the British South African Company, otherwise known as the Chartered Company (Thompson, 2007:28-29).

Milner and Rhodes shared many similar views and intentions, but with Milner a kind of vector for three closely aligned though separate strands of thinking: of Rhodes, his own ideas, and of the British Government that he formally represented. Milner's position was firmly imperialistic, and his overarching goal was to maintain or strengthen the British Empire. He believed the best way to do so was through imperial unity of the British colonies and self-governing dominions in Southern Africa. The Cape, Natal, and the independent republics of the Transvaal and Orange Free State came under his gaze, and much of his strategizing was directed by this belief. Rhodes, on the other hand, firmly believed in British imperialism, but also in himself as an agentic force.

An important dynamic that distinguished Rhodes and Milner concerns the routes through which power and influence were exerted by them. Milner's influence was largely exerted through the political-administrative positions he held and his widely remarked upon charm, through which he built important social and other networks. Rhodes exerted power through a number of different channels, importantly including his financial power, his wide array of businesses, and also his political career, which led him to premiership of the Cape. Rhodes was also supremely able to galvanise and influence people and draw them into his vision; his charisma and personal magnetism was unmatched, as was his purse. Both men built small figurations of young men around them. In the case of Milner, these were the members of the Kindergarden, while for Rhodes, they were his secretaries or bodyguards. In the case of Rhodes, he exerted great influence over the British Government, the 'Uitlanders' in South Africa, and the 'Cape Dutch' Boer population, as well as the small army of acolytes he surrounded himself with. Rhodes very much depended on these social and political connections and his enormous wealth, without which he could not have succeeded as he did.

The first letter chronologically from Rhodes in the Milner Papers is written from Luxor, Egypt, in 1893. Rhodes had been traveling along the Nile while promoting his plan of extending a telegraph line from South Africa to Cairo as a first step before a 'Cape to Cairo' rail line. He was also reading a book Milner had written, *England and Egypt* (1892), which argues for a continued British occupation of Egypt.⁴³ Rhodes's letter discusses the value for Britain remaining there. It also states in emotional terms that if Milner had been there (in Egypt), Rhodes would "begin to look upon our friendship as a marriage. Indeed I often wonder why it is that meeting you so seldom and knowing you so slightly as I do. I will always feel that this friendship is an irrefutable fact – but it is so, so far as I am concerned".⁴⁴ This was perhaps meant but was certainly also instrumental, for Milner had been British under-secretary of finance in Egypt until 1892.

The next letter, dated 7 June 1897, was sent to Milner from Cape Town. Rhodes states his agreement with Milner's wish to make the territory that would later be called Rhodesia a protectorate, as this would not prejudice the rights of the Charter. He is referring to the British South Africa Company (BSAC), the mercantile company formed by Rhodes and others. The BSAC, often referred to as Rhodes's Chartered Company, received Royal Charter in October 1889. This allowed it to form banks, own, manage and grant or distribute land, and raise its own armed police force, in return for developing the territory it controlled. By 1900, the BSAC was

⁴³ Milner had spent 2 ½ years in Egypt, first as Director General of Accounts in the Ministry of Finance, and as Under-Secretary in the same Ministry. Egypt had defaulted on the payment of foreign debt amounting to over £90,000,000, and thus Egypt's creditors assumed control of finances to ensure payment of debt (Marlowe, 1976: 16).

⁴⁴ Dep. 28. Fol. 161.

administering Southern and Northern Rhodesia, and was in essence a quasi-commercial private government.

The next letter was sent almost a year later, dated 18 March 1898 from Groote Schuur, Rhodes's house in Cape Town. Rhodes presses Milner to push the British Government to assist his plans for a railway north/south across Africa, in this case concerning Tanganyika, the territory today known as Tanzania, and reassures Milner that he will "not in any way embarrass H.M. Government if I think pressing my claim might do the cause harm". This raises the complexity of Rhodes and Milner's relationship and also the idea of 'the cause'. Milner had been appointed as High Commissioner for Southern Africa and Governor of the Cape Colony in March 1897. Rhodes, on the other hand, a year prior to this had had to resign as Prime Minister of the Cape Colony after the Jameson Raid, and in 1897 was focused on building 'his' railway from Cape to Cairo.

The next letter was sent from Kimberley in August 1898 and focuses on the forthcoming elections. Rhodes had taken over leadership of the Cape's Progressive Party in late 1897 and used his capital, newspapers and other means to win an election against WP (Will) Schreiner, who led the South Africa Party. It also mentions Rhodes receiving a letter from Chamberlain stating that the British Cabinet is favourable towards his proposed railway-line to Tanganyika. Milner is written to in this letter as being more or less openly in support of Rhodes's Progressive Party and his other projects.

The following two letters were sent in July and September 1899, just before the outbreak of the South African War (October 1899), and a few months after the Bloemfontein Conference held between 31 May and 5 June 1899. This was held as a last-ditch effort at reconciliation to prevent war between the Boer states and Britain. Milner has been seen by many as fermenting the South African War, partly as the result of his unreasonable political and economic demands on Kruger at this conference, and partly his related unwillingness to compromise (Maylam, 2005; Thomas, 1996: 335; Roberts, 1987: 516). These letters focus primarily on the political situation, in particular the Transvaal franchise, a bone of contention in the run-up to war (Geyser, 2010: 419).

The next letter was in March 1900. Rhodes was at the time besieged within Kimberley, and his letter requests Milner's permission to use De Beers capital (which he could control) to purchase artillery (which as a civilian he needed permission for). Rhodes then wrote to Milner two months later in May 1900 regarding English settlers in South Africa and his other plans, including a railway line going to the Victoria Falls, mine and gold prospects, North Eastern Rhodesia, and extending the telegraph to Egypt. The last letter from Rhodes is dated a year later in May 1901, and focuses on his movements, that he wants to discuss Chinese labour, and to buy land in the Transvaal and get Beit involved in its purchase.

PRE-TEXT

Until this point, Rhodes's letters to Milner focus on high level concerns for Southern Africa. Both men had a particular – and it seems largely shared – vision for Southern Africa and often cooperated regarding such things as the form of government in Southern Africa, increasing the number of British settlers, the development of infrastructure across Africa, and the conduct of the South African War. While the discussion of these issues implies a closeness, there are few direct expressions of the nature of their relationship. However, on 28 August 1900, Milner wrote a fairly long letter (by his standards) to Rhodes about 'a certain lady' who he does not refer to by name. A copy is in the Milner Papers. It concerns Princess Catherine Radziwill, a Polish aristocrat who was by this point a thorn in the side of Rhodes and Milner. Her activities made it necessary for Milner to state his position regarding Rhodes, and this provides some insights into their relationship.

The first time Rhodes met Radziwill was in 1896 in England, when he was invited to the home of Morberley Bell, the manager of *The Times*, where she was also a guest. She then made her way to South Africa. Her first trip in 1899 was purposefully on the same ship as Rhodes, when she inveigled an invitation to stay at Groote Schuur, Rhodes's Cape Town home. Radziwill explicitly pursued Rhodes romantically, although Rhodes evaded this, and her plans were further undermined by various unscrupulous behaviours coming to light: she forged letters in Rhodes's name, claimed he wanted to marry her, and spread other rumours (Roberts, 1969).

During the South African War, Radziwill claimed she wanted to bring the Afrikaner Bond (a political organisation spanning the four settler states) and Rhodes together and to make Rhodes Premier of the Cape again. Her strategy was to cast Milner as a common enemy. The Bond was antagonistic towards Milner as High Commissioner because of his treatment of the Transvaal, and Radziwill tried to persuade Rhodes that Milner was working against him. She sent messages warning him against Milner and, at the same time used her entrée at Government House to set Milner against Rhodes (Roberts, 1969). While he was in Rhodesia, Rhodes was in touch with Milner concerning possible new farming communities after the war. His aim was to attract Uitlanders from the towns in order to balance the Boer vote in the countryside. In the course of this correspondence, Rhodes raised Radziwill's attempts to set Milner against him. He was promptly sent Milner's response. Milner's letter to Rhodes follows.

THE TEXT

Copy.⁴⁵

1 Private and Confidential

28/8/00

⁴⁵ Dep 467. Fol. 2.

2 My dear Mr. Rhodes,

3 I am going to return a confidence which you once showed me, and for which I have always felt grateful.

4 I refer to your once frankly telling me about the proceedings of a certain lady, who was trying to make
5 mischief between us by telling either party lies as to what the other had said about him.

6 The lady in question has recently returned to S. Africa. I should be sorry to say a word against her
7 personally. Indeed she is but slightly known to me. And I am able to view her methods with more leniency,
8 now that I know that her object, as far as I am concerned at any rate, is a purely political one.

9 This is a matter on which the evidence I have is beyond question. The game, in which she is taking a hand,
10 is first the old game, very dear, no doubt, to the foreign enemies of our race and country, of sowing distrust,
11 in order to set up an ultimate split, between you and me.

12 As a matter-of-fact I know that an intrigue, in which the person referred to is taking a part, and which indeed
13 she has perhaps started, is in full swing just now, with the object of getting you to assist in preserving to
14 the Republics some degree of independence and this "saving the face" of Bond, & slapping the face of the
15 Imperial Government & its representative.

16 It is a crazy scheme, & it is not from any fear of you lending an ear to it, especially after the generous and
17 consistent support you have shown me through all this trying crisis – & that at a time when my position
18 was much weaker than it is to-day – that I am writing these lines. I am quite easy about the cabal. But I am
19 not quite so happy, in view of the future & of the infinite importance, for public reasons, of a continued
20 good personal understanding & absolute frankness between you & me, about the lies, innuendos &
21 suggestions wh. may be poured into your ear in the course of it. No doubt you escape much, being absent.
22 But, being absent, you may also be bewildered, I will not say misled, by tricks wh., if on the spot, you
23 would see through in a moment.

24 Therefore I say to you – precisely as you once said to me – if you are told anything about myself, wh. implies
25 either that I distrusted your cooperation with me, or that I wish to hamper your own big work or detract
26 from the influence wh. you exercise & always must exercise in the development of S. Africa – please, do
27 me the justice & the kindness absolutely to disbelieve it. I don't for the life of me see why we should ever
28 clash, for there is work enough for both of us, in all conscience, in the next year or two, in working out the
29 future of the great British country here, which is going, I trust, not only to federate itself, as a free nation,
30 like Canada & Australia, but to be one of the means of federating the Empire.

31 Of course, we may differ, here & there, as to policy. If so, I am sure we can in the future, as in the past,
32 discuss all difference frankly, & with mutual trust, brushing aside the suspicion & the *arreres pensees*
33 which certain reptiles are never tired of trying to implant in the minds of both of us.

34 I will not now discuss any public questions, though I hope I may have an opportunity of doing so before
35 many months are out. I will only say that on the big things I stand in opinion where I stood when last we
36 met, & I believe you do the same. The protraction of the war is a great nuisance, but a year or two hence it
37 will matter very little whether it lasted a few months more or less. Every day that passes & everything that
38 turns up, convinces me more than ever of the hopelessness of any half-&-half solution, & that it is only as

39 an integral part of the British Empire, that S. Africa can have either a really free government or a fusion of
 40 races. Anything like a compromise, anything that could leave even a chink of hope for the ultimate
 41 realisation of Dutch nationalist aspirations, would mean eternal discord, & might mean a series of civil
 42 wars.

43 This letter obviously requires no answer. Its object is merely to prevent a possible, even if improbable,
 44 sowing of future mischief.

45 It is one consolation, amid many troubles, that people at home seem as keen as ever to “stick it out” & see
 46 the thing through once and for all.

47 I hope you are well & that Rhodesian prospects are improving.

48 Yours etc.

49 (Sgn.) A. Milner

ANALYSIS

Milner begins by stating that his letter is a “return of confidence” (line 3), recognising that Rhodes had previously indicated his confidence in Milner by ignoring what Radziwill had been insinuating (probably done in a face-to-face communication). It implies that both men viewed their relationship as important and actively worked to maintain a good understanding. This was probably because both were aware of the power the other could exert, realised their respective projects because overlapping were strengthened by the other, and so needed each other to a significant degree.

Milner then moves to the reason for his explicit statement of confidence (line 6-7), that Radziwill had attempted to “make mischief”. It is notable that Milner does not use her name explicitly, perhaps because he was not certain the contents of his letter would remain entirely confidential and so might be used against him at a later stage. The context is that Radziwill had stolen important documents from Rhodes and had actively used these to try and manipulate him and others. Milner continues (line 6) that Radziwill had returned to South Africa. She had originally left after running into debts which were paid by Rhodes with the condition that she left South Africa. However, in London she tried to pay off a debt by falsely claiming a pearl necklace was stolen in a London hotel, and she returned to South Africa. In this part of the letter, Milner states that he is willing to be “more lenient” (line 7) as he believes her objectives were largely political. This implies that her Machiavellian activities were viewed less severely if done for political reasons rather than economic gain or a personal dislike for Milner. Milner is perhaps able to empathize more with political manoeuvring, a game he was very skilled at, than with greed or callousness.

Milner's interpretation of Radziwill's actions is then clarified (line 9-15) as playing the game of "the foreign enemies of our race and country, of sowing distrust, in order to set up an ultimate split, between you and me" (lines 10-11). More specifically, Milner views Radziwill's actions as an attempt to divide him and Rhodes, with the aim of decreasing cohesion between the two key men in the British project in Southern Africa and regarding the South African War. What made their connection fragile was that Rhodes was not required to serve it by virtue of his formal position, as was Milner. His commitment was partly to the British Empire, but partly to further his destiny within this. In theory he could give up on the connection with Milner, because his commitment came from other sources, not from his part in a ruling group or figuration through a government appointment.

Milner then moves on to show his confidence in Rhodes (lines 16-18). He did not "fear of you lending an ear to it" (line 16), for he is suggesting that their relationship is impervious to such outside influences. This shows, not necessarily a strong bond between them, but Milner's wish that such a bond *should* exist. He frames the importance of the strength of their relationship as for "public reasons", for a cause both serve and which Milner sees as being of "infinite importance" (line 19). Milner thinks it necessary to highlight the bond, pointing out that its strength had been maintained "at a time when my position was much weaker than today"; then again in lines 21-22, he indicates his confidence that Rhodes would not be misled by events. Milner is going to great lengths to emphasise the strength of their connection, or stating it is so in order to maintain a bond which he feels crucial to the larger project that he represents. In the following paragraph (lines 24-30), Milner asks Rhodes not to believe any claims that he distrusts Rhodes or wishes to hamper his "big work" in South Africa (line 26). He has no interest in getting in Rhodes's way, implying here that he will not attempt to check Rhodes's activities (lines 25-26). This is interesting as, although a British official, Milner is in effect giving Rhodes his support free from the confines of London-directed British policy in South Africa.

This idea of the Imperial project in South Africa is further discussed in lines 28-30, where Milner describes his vision of a federation of the Empire. He clearly thinks that he and Rhodes have a high degree of influence on the future of Southern Africa in stating that they have plenty of work "in working out the future of the [South Africa]". And there is no reason why they should "ever clash" (line 27-28). Milner believes or is stating for persuasive purposes that their visions are very similar. However, Milner acknowledges that they differ on certain policy-related points (line 31) and emphasises in line 32, as in line 20, that they should be frank and open with one another, perhaps because Milner did not want ideas or strategies forming in Rhodes's mind which he did not know about.

Milner then states that he will not discuss the larger issues – which usually compose the bulk of their correspondence (line 34-35). However, he then mentions one of the "big things", which has

to do with the South African War and that its outcome cannot be a “half-&-half solution” (line 38), referring to his desire for the independent Boer republics to be integrated within the British Empire, in a British controlled South Africa.

Milner ends by commenting that his letter’s purpose is in its content, that is, to avoid any possible misunderstandings caused by Radziwill. This is followed referring to Joseph Chamberlain – the British Minister most responsible – and other political figures as being as “keen as ever” (line 45-46) regarding the war effort in South Africa. However, with the benefit of hindsight, this was not actually the case. The South African War was turning into the costliest war Britain had fought, and Milner was keeping Chamberlain in the dark about the extremity of his practical policies on the ground in his dealings with the Republics and their leaders.

POST-TEXT

Rhodes did respond to Milner’s letter, and this appears to have been written by Rhodes himself (rather than by a secretary and just signed by him). The collection contains an undated letter from Rhodes to Milner, sent from Bulawayo simply dated ‘Tuesday’, but with its contents making it certain that this is indeed a response to Milner’s letter just discussed.⁴⁶

Milner’s letter was sent on a Tuesday, so Rhodes’s reply was sent a week later. It states that “the lady” Milner mentions could not affect him regarding any change in policy concerning the Boer States. It also describes how, while in Kimberley, he received letters which said that Milner was jealous of him and wished to get him out of Africa. Rhodes reassures Milner that he did not believe him to be “so small of a man”, but that the “endless drip always leaves something”.

Rhodes then moves on to his trip ‘north’, that is, to what is now Zimbabwe, and states his wish to see Milner after attending a South African League meeting. He describes as representing the views of many Transvaal Uitlanders (an exaggeration); and in relation to the Afrikaner Bond, he comments that “a man will have to be one side or the other”. He suggests the League could be an important vehicle through which ‘closer union’ of the states in Southern Africa could be achieved. As a footnote here, in a letter marked private and confidential that Milner sent to Rhodes on 9 September 1900,⁴⁷ five days after Rhodes had written his response, he writes that “the person therein referred to” has provided an explanation. This was that “she herself now admits that, in representing my attitude towards you as an unfriendly me she was mistaken then and disclaims any similar thought now”. It seems that Milner, known for his charm, had been on the receiving end of Radziwill’s.

⁴⁶ Dep. 467. F.5 – Dep. 467. Fol. 6B.

⁴⁷ Dep. 467. Fol. 10 – 10A.

This particular collection of letters ends with six letters sent from Rhodes to Radziwill, and one final letter from Milner to Rhodes. They are essentially Rhodes telling Radziwill that she should leave him alone. However, a 2 December dated letter discusses close cooperation with her. This is clearly odd, as Rhodes seemingly goes from viewing Radziwill as a threat to actively cooperating with her in hiding his activities from Milner and using her influence over Stead for his own interests. This letter seems to be one of those forged by Radziwill. In the following letter, dated 6 February 1901, Rhodes once again discusses politics and ask Radziwill to find out what Milner thinks about the political situation in South Africa. Another forgery.

SUCCEEDING CONTEXT

Put narrowly regarding these letters, because of Rhodes's death not long after this last letter from Milner, there was no succeeding context. But of course, in a wider sense there *was* a succeeding context in which the diverse influences of Rhodes and the legacy of his companies, political agenda, financial interests, and also the Rhodes Trust, continued to play out. This can be discerned across other letters discussed in this chapter. The next letters to Milner for discussion are those of Rhodes's close associate Alfred Beit.

THE MILNER AND BEIT LETTERS

THE CONTEXT

The literature contains no mentions of a relationship between Milner and Beit after Rhodes's death. This was probably because they were active in different spheres; Milner was focused (almost exclusively) in the political domain, while Beit seems to have had little interest in politics apart from his connection with the Jameson Raid, though this had more to do with his friendship with Rhodes than any political concerns. Beit's story is tightly interwoven with Rhodes. Rhodes was the active politician and the one with the broad vision, while Beit was concerned with making Rhodes's vision into reality through skilful financial practice and connections. Rhodes was in many ways dependent on Beit for financial advice and aid. Indeed, Beit had let Rhodes and Gold Fields Consolidated into a number of his firm's flotations including Rand Mines on the basis of their relationship. In return it would appear Beit derived a sense of status and satisfaction from his association with Rhodes (Kubicek, 1972: 98-99). However, this is not understate Beit's independent significance in mining finance circles. Much of the success of the Rand can be attributed to Beit, and the success of Rhodes was very much dependent on Beit's access to capital and its network connections and his outstanding financial acumen.

Beit received his business training in Hamburg, then was originally sent to South Africa in 1875 by Lippert and Co. to buy diamonds. He later joined Julius Wernher on the board of Jules Porgés

& Co. (see Chapter 4). Beit became business friends with Rhodes through his role in the Kimberley Central Company. He put at Rhodes's disposal not only his friendship but also his connections in the world of international finance, which Rhodes lacked. For example, Beit linked Rhodes to Nathan Rothschild, the beginning of a long association. Between them there was strong mutual trust – Beit was Rhodes's "financial genius" (Marlowe, 1972: 67–97).

Jules Porgés and Company teamed up with Rhodes in his bid to amalgamate the diamond companies. Porgés was in turn connected to Rodolphe Kann, head of a key Paris financial house. Through Kann, the support of the Rothschild banking house was obtained in raising the capital needed for Rhodes to buy up shares in the company controlled by his chief rival, Barnato (Kubicek, 1972: 94). It was this that allowed Rhodes to dominate the Kimberley diamond fields and Rhodesia and achieve amalgamation of the diamond industry (Lockhart and Woodhouse, 1963: 111).

Beit made London his base in 1888. Initially he worked in Wernher Beit & Co. and was active concurrently as a Director of both De Beers and the Chartered Company. In 1901, Beit travelled from France to Italy in the company of key Rhodes supporters including Jameson, Sir Charles Metcalfe, Arnold Moseley, Captain Rose-Innes and Rhodes himself. Rhodes died a year later. Many of the responsibilities previously on Rhodes's shoulders were now borne by Beit, and he returned to the executive board of the Chartered Company. However, at this time De Beers bought out his and Wernher's rights as lifelong governors for £3,000,000 in shares (Albrecht, 2007: 118).

THE LETTERS

The Milner collection contains just four letters connected with Beit, two of which are from Beit to Milner, a third from P. Lyttelton Gell to Beit, and a final letter from W.J. Chalmers to Beit. The letter from Gell to Beit, dated 15 August 1900, is concerned with a once enclosed letter from Lord Curzon (a conservative British statesman who was the Viceroy of India at the time), not now in the collection. Gell's letter is concerned with a scheme to 'assist' Rhodesia with Indian labour, stating that Curzon had intended to write to Rhodes about this but did not have the time, and that he wanted to "stir the fire from this end without further delay". This scheme aimed to use Indian labour on railway construction, thereby reducing pressure upon the amount of 'native' labour available for the mines. The letter from Chalmers dated 2 June 1902 is concerned with a meeting with Beit and Jameson regarding the Rhodes Scholarships established following Rhodes's death three months earlier. The final two letters are from Beit to Milner, dated 7 and 8 August 1901.

This last correspondence occurred while Milner was in London (arriving 24 May 1901), on leave before taking up his duties as Administrator of the former Boer republics, which had been annexed, although commando warfare continued. While in the UK, Milner spent time discussing the post-war settlement with Chamberlain and had several discussions with the War Office and

Lord Roberts regarding the planned end to the South African War. Milner also made time to focus on his intention to increase British immigration to South Africa, to change the population balance in the longer term. This was to establish a numerically stronger counter-nationalism to Boer/Afrikaner nationalism (Denoon, 1973: 40-41). Regarding his plans for governance of the new British colonies, Milner was recruiting young men for his Kindergarden of junior administrators who shared his ideas and would help administer them (Thompson, 2007: 89).

PRE-TEXT

Towards the end of his stay (he left for South Africa on 10 August 1901), Milner also met Rhodes, who had arrived in England in July. At the meeting, Rhodes told Milner about his Will, plans for the Rhodes Scholarships, and invited Milner to be one of his Trustees (Marlowe, 1976: 115; Thompson, 2007: 68-70; Halpérin, 1952: 114-117). Milner was incredibly busy, but still found time to address Rhodes's wishes, which must have been high on his list of priorities considering the larger concerns he was dealing with at the time.

One of the August 1901 letters mentions Sir Lewis Mitchell, who was the Chairman of the British South Africa Company, Rhodes's banker and also his earliest biographer; he also described himself as an unabashed admirer (Rotberg, 1988: 53).⁴⁸ Although Rhodes was largely helped in his diamond industry consolidation by Beit, advice from Mitchell played a role. Mitchell held Rhodes's general power of attorney, acting for him in particular regarding the BSAC. They shared ideas about the goals of what became the Rhodes scholarships and Mitchell was invited to be another Trustee. Consequently, Rhodes wanted Mitchell to succeed him as chairman of De Beers Consolidated Mines and become a director of the BSAC. After 1902, he retired from the Standard Bank and was appointed chairman of De Beers Consolidated Mines and a BSAC director.⁴⁹ From 1905, he concentrated on the business of the Rhodes Trust and the BSAC.

The letters following involve some of the most central men in Rhodes's life. Beit and Michell were close associates and admirers who dealt with much of Rhodes's financial engineering, while Milner was concerned with the same political and ideological vision. Rhodes trusted them to the extent that they would manage his legacy, something which was highly important to him.

THE FIRST TEXT

- 1 August 7, 1901
- 2 120, Bishopsgate Street Within. E.C.

⁴⁸ Mitchell SLM (1910) *The Life of the Rt. Hon. Cecil John Rhodes, 1853-1902 (Vol. I-II)*.

⁴⁹ <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-35012>

3 Dear Lord Milner

4 I am in receipt of your letter of the 5th inst. Enclosing my draft of the letter which you propose to address
5 to Mr. Michell after seeing him in Capetown.

6 I think it basically expresses our understanding and I will show it ^confidentially^ to one of the Directors
7 of Consolidated Mines tomorrow.

8 Assuming his assurance of which I have no doubt, Mr. Michell will be authorized by next mail to draw
9 from time to time sums ^as^ required up to a total amount of £250,000. – for pro rata on the contributors.

10 Trusting that your terms of settlement may be immensely successful,

11 I remain

12 Yours very truly,

13 A. Beit

THE SECOND TEXT

1 August 8 1901

2 120, Bishopsgate Street Within. E.C.

3 Dear Lord Milner

4 Since writing to you yesterday, I have seen the Chairman of the De Beers Co. who agrees with the plan
5 initiated in your draft letter to Mr. Michell. By tomorrow's mail, instructions will be sent to their Kimberley
6 office to notify Mr. Mitchell that the £100,000 is at his disposal as required.

7 In the event of your deciding to modify the scheme the De Beers C. would be glad if Mr. Michell will obtain
8 sanction to any modification from the Board in Kimberley. So far as my firm + Mr Rhodes are concerned
9 authority will be sent to Mr. Randell or in his absence Mr. [unreadable] to ask for us in that regard.

10 Regarding our conversation about the water supply for the Rand I learn from Mr. Randell that the Chamber
11 of Mines are meeting the Town Council upon the inspect I think it better under the circumstances not to
12 place my suggestion before you, as they might differ from an agreement which may be arrived at from the
13 spot, and which no doubt will be submitted to you.

14 Wishing you a pleasant voyage

15 I remain

16 Yours very truly,

17 A. Beit

ANALYSIS

The first letter was sent by Beit on 7 August 1901 and is a response to Milner's letter of 5 August 1901. This had included a draft of a letter which Beit had made and Milner likely edited, which is no longer present. Beit and Milner were working together on something, and Beit states that this letter expresses "their understanding" (line 6). In other words, this is either an understanding that Milner and Beit had come to, or more likely one also involving Beit's associates at the higher levels of Consolidated Mines.

Milner is addressed in a formal way, and Beit provides a full signature, as if to ensure Milner knows who the letter is from (Beit, rather than a secretary or administrator), and to maintain a level of formality between them. The structure of the letters, then, indicates a formal and business-like relationship. These letters, as well as the literature, does not indicate anything closer. Communication and contact between them seems to have existed because of Rhodes's relationship with Milner, and was as such a secondary connection. However, Milner would have been very aware of Beit's importance. Milner's South African project was very much dependent on the revenues generated from gold mining, in which industry Beit was one of the most prominent figures. Indeed, a kind of alliance was forged between the managers of the gold industry, with the Wernher-Beit complex at the centre of this, and the Transvaal government, which depended on mining revenue for its budget, employment provision, and private capital investment for projects for which public finance was insufficient. In May 1900, as the Administrator of the annexed territories, Milner was contemplating a more direct link through borrowing money from Wernher and Beit to pay for the cost of administration. Though the scheme was not implemented, Milner apparently saw no problem in allowing the government to be indebted to Randlords and mining interests (Denoon, 1973: 41-42).

The fact that Milner and Beit were exchanging drafts of a letter for Mitchell indicates that the letter had considerable importance for them, and also that they were close enough in a business or related sense to be doing things behind the scenes. They were in elite positions in their respective fields, were extremely busy, yet found the time to cooperate to formulate a letter suitable for Mitchell. This three-way grouping came into existence for a purpose.

After the letter was handwritten, Beit added "confidentially" (line 6), probably to reassure Milner that it would remain private between them and a few close associates. 'Confidentially' here also involves a Director of Consolidated Mines, which suggests fairly strongly that the letter was concerned with that company's business. The amount of attention given is likely to also relate to the amount of money involved. In the background, Rhodes was trusting over £250,000 to Mitchell, nearly £30,000,000 in today's terms. However, between the period of the first and

second letters, negotiation and further discussion must have occurred behind closed doors, as the amount was scaled down to £100,000.

In the letter of 8 August, in line 7 Beit uses “your” instead of “you”, suggesting that he viewed Milner and Mitchell as coupled together, and thus the scheme involved both and the De Beers Company. In line 8, Beit states that so far as “his” firm and “Mr Rhodes” are concerned, as if his company and Rhodes were separate entities, though acting together. It is also not clear from the way he writes whether Rhodes actually knew about these negotiations, or whether it was business being conducted with Beit acting for him.

The final paragraph of the 8 August letter (lines 10-13), is focused on the water supply of the Rand. Large amounts of water were necessary for extracting gold from the rock and running the large stamps. Some mines could provide water for themselves, but overall there were constant worry that water was in short supply. In preparing for the post-war period, plans were made in 1901 to have the Transvaal’s water supply investigated. There had been earlier requests for this from the Johannesburg town council and the Chamber of Mines. Consequently, on 4 November 1901 the Transvaal military government appointed the Witwatersrand Water Supply Commission. Milner’s involvement in this was because the imperial plan as he interpreted it depended upon the development of new mining enterprises, which by 1900 would be mostly deep-level operations (Denoon, 1973: 41-42).

POST-TEXT AND SUCCEEDING CONTEXT

With the death of Rhodes in 1902, Beit as one of its trustees helped control the enormous Rhodes Estate, with the Oppenheimer family of De Beers and Anglo-American. Milner also became the *de facto* leader of the South African imperialism supporters, said to inherit some of Rhodes’s stature as a rallying-point (Denoon, 1973: xiii). From 1903, however, Beit was in poor health, had a stroke in January 1903 and never fully recovered. He died in July 1906 (Albrecht, 2007: 118; Boyd & Phimister, 2006).

Neither the secondary literature nor these letters indicate a close relationship between Milner and Beit, but a connection did exist because of the figurations they were part of and also specific contextual matters meant that many of their interests aligned. To understand the relationship between them, circumstantial and figural dynamics need considering. The circumstantial aspects involve closely interconnected factors: imperialism and how it translated from a metropolitan-based venture into local commitments and activities; Milner’s position and the abilities and constraints he brought to this; the characteristics of competing and interwoven figurations; and the interconnections between these and industrial development, land and the mining industry in South Africa.

The imperial issue in Southern Africa was not as stark as a British metropole imposing itself on African and Boer communities. Indeed, imperial power in South Africa was not exclusively driven by the British state, but significantly included men in various government, political and business positions who shared similar views. Rhodes has already been noted, with his brand of imperialism very much his own rather than an offshoot of the imperial government. Milner had over time given rise to a figuration around his position and personality, and while more broadly his brand of imperialism overlapped with Rhodes's it was not coterminous, with Rhodes's brand closely interwoven with his power and identity, and Milner's with his formal position.

The imperial project in South Africa, and Milner's and Rhodes's goals there, rested on the idea that there was a 'British' figuration that could act as such and on which imperial policy as they formulated it could hinge, and that this could be expanded through immigration to become more powerful than the Boer nationalist figuration. Milner and those around him thought that this community was more imperial, united and numerous than it really was. The failure to establish South Africa as a British dominion, the removal of Milner from his post in 1905, and the loss of the South African elections in 1907, can largely be attributed to the lack of cohesion between the South African English-speakers in particular in the Transvaal, and the existence of a growing sense of unity among Boers (Denoon, 1973: 6-7, 15). While there were fissures amongst the latter, the political disaster of the Jameson Raid had alienated the vast majority of the Boer population from British imperial politics. Differences of occupation, social and political background, length of time in South Africa, wealth etc. meant that the English-speakers were not a homogenous or united group, while the Jameson Raid, the effects of the South African War, and the growth of nationalism meant that over time the Boer/Afrikaner population increasingly coalesced. Milner's failed importation of British farmers and workers further left him without the larger British figuration he had hoped to create.

Milner's imperial plan depended upon the mining industry and its future success. He viewed the industry as the backbone of capital – through mining revenue – and the basis on which a British-oriented South Africa could be built, as the provider of private capital investment to fund projects for which public finance was insufficient (Denoon, 1973: 41). One such project was land settlement. The Eckstein group through the Consolidated Land Company, which Beit led, owned 3,000,000 acres in the Transvaal, which was offered to the Transvaal government on condition the Company retained its mineral rights (Denoon, 1973: 74). And as previously mentioned, Milner at one time considered borrowing money from Wernher and Beit.

So how does Beit feature in this? What these factors indicate is an alliance through overlapping interests between Milner and his grouping, and certain sectors of the mining industry. Beit was an important part of the latter camp because of his central position on the Rand and firm support for Rhodes and the imperial project. While he was not as vocal as other Randlords regarding his

position, his actions spoke louder than words. The above two letters provide indication of a micro event and bring to the surface signs of this association. They also indicate that there were two figurations which closely overlapped, around Milner and around Rhodes, and that at important political junctures this gave rise to a third composite figuration. This latter did not stretch into the British Empire, nor even into the English-speaking community, nor was it characteristic of all the Randlords. Rather, it was an association of elites, of key men – Cecil Rhodes, Alfred Milner, Alfred Beit among them – with many shared and joint interests, including shared beliefs about the imperial project, which brought them together. This elite figuration was a grouping at the highest level who shared a vision that, as events transpired, quickly failed, largely because they overestimated how broadly this vision was shared and underestimated the disaffection of the Boer/Afrikaner population in the Transvaal and more widely and its harnessing to a nationalist political platform.

THE JULIUS WERNHER LETTERS

THE JULIUS WERNHER LETTERS INTRODUCED

This sub-section of the Milner Collection contains more than just a set of letters from Wernher to Milner, with its diverse contents including a number of the people already mentioned in this chapter. The focus is the letters that cluster around the Wernher/Milner connection specifically. A notable feature of the ‘Wernher’ letters is that they contain numerous letters from Percy Fitzpatrick (1862-1931),⁵⁰ which Wernher seemingly passed on to Milner. Fitzpatrick was an outspoken and brash Randlord, who became known for the level of detail in his pronouncements and his political insensitivity and tactlessness. Understanding the Wernher letters throws as much light on Fitzpatrick and his relationship with Milner and Wernher as it does Wernher’s relationship with Milner. As a consequence, Fitzpatrick will be discussed as well as Wernher. This will be followed in a later section by the ‘actual’ Fitzpatrick letters, which will build on discussion here.

There are twenty-one Wernher to Milner letters, stretching over a ten-year period between June 1899 and November 1909. They can broadly be separated into ‘events’. The first two, dated 19 January and 16 June 1899, are from Wernher to Milner and concern the difficult political situation in South Africa and thanking Milner for his efforts, the first event. The third letter, dated 6 October 1903, is the second event. Here Wernher states his pleasure that Milner is returning to rebuild South Africa, and also discusses the use of Chinese labour.

⁵⁰ Biographies by Cartwright (1971) and Wallis (1955) had access to many documents no longer available.

The bulk of the letters (fifteen in total) are concentrated in the period from 19 February 1906 to 9 June 1906, with all except one sent in May or June, and they cover the third event. They are concerned with a constitutional Committee that had been established and the form representation would take in the new constitutions of the Transvaal and the Free State. They are either enclosed with discussions between the chairman of the constitutional committee and a small group acting as the representatives of the Progressive Party and English-speaking South Africans more generally, or else are updates on happenings sent to Wernher by Percy Fitzpatrick or Lionel Phillips. This group included Percy Fitzpatrick, J. Roy, Wallace Soutter, F.C. Dumat, and Abe Bailey.

These letters are all classified in the collection inventory as 'letters to Lord Milner', encompassing letters from Wernher to Milner, or as 'letters to, with enclosures', which are copies of letters from Milner to Wernher. Only 7 are from Wernher to Milner, while the remaining 134 folios are copies of letters and enclosures from Milner. From this, Wernher does not appear to have played an active role in the ongoing events, although some within the Progressives, and several significant Randlords, felt it necessary to keep him updated, and they do so in a way which assumes he took the Progressives position. The collection also includes three drafts of one particular document, which may indicate that Wernher participated in its editing. Why these correspondences between Wernher and Fitzpatrick are in the Milner collection is not known, though it is possible that Wernher sent these to Milner to keep him updated on ongoing events.

During this constitutional debacle another event occurred, the fourth. Alfred Beit died on 16 July 1906, and Milner sent Wernher a letter stating his appreciation of Beit. In a letter dated 20 July 1906, Wernher thanked Milner for this letter and stated that Beit was one of Milner's most loyal followers and had the greatest admiration for him and his work. The final letter, dated 26 November 1909, was sent to Wernher and B.P. Hawksley, and has to do with the sale of a farm to them in the Orange River Colony and the handing over of title deeds. It is the last event of interest signalled in these letters.

CONTEXT

Fitzpatrick was born in South Africa and very much saw himself as South African. However, his father was a judge in Cape Town and he grew up as a privileged colonial thinking the British system of government set standards that all 'civilized' people should accept. Like many at the time, Fitzpatrick sought his fortune in Barberton when gold was found in 1884, working as a clerk for Hirschel Cohen and Harry Graumann, who owned businesses in Barberton itself. This company did a lot of work for Alfred Beit, Fitzpatrick who handled these matters and saw a great deal of Beit (Cartwright, 1971; Wessels, 2004).

After the relative decline of Barberton, Fitzpatrick moved to the Rand to take up a position with Cohen and Graumann, but after a market crash on the Rand, the firm was financially wiped out. Fitzpatrick then obtained a trading concession for food and liquor stores along the railway line between Lourenço Marques and Pretoria, being built at the time. While there, Fitzpatrick received a letter from J.B. Taylor, who he had met in Barberton and was now a partner in the firm of Hermann Eckstein, the Corner House, asking whether he would take charge of the vehicles, oxen and horses being assembled for a trek that Alfred Beit and Lord Randolph Churchill proposed to make to Mashonaland (now Zimbabwe), where Rhodes hoped to establish a new British colony under the Chartered Company (Cartwright, 1971: 38-48; Fitzpatrick, 1932: 28).

After doing so, Fitzpatrick returned to Barberton where he worked for Taylor in the intelligence department of Taylor and Eckstein, the local representatives of Wernher & Beit in London (Cartwright, 1971: 53). He joined the House of Eckstein in June 1892. Taylor made Fitzpatrick his deputy, and in 1893 Fitzpatrick's first important job concerned the Rand Mines, for which he was the first secretary. This position brought him into close contact with Julius Wernher. He was offered a partnership in H. Eckstein & Co. in 1898 (Cartwright, 1971: 111; Wallis, 1955: 37).

Fitzpatrick first met Milner in 1898. Milner arrived towards the end of 1897 to take up his appointment as Governor of the Cape Colony and British High Commissioner in South Africa. They met for the first time at Newlands House. Wallis (1955: 69) states that Fitzpatrick had reported to Wernher about this meeting and what was discussed, including the values and aspirations of the Ecksteins. Thereafter Fitzpatrick modelled his political thinking on Milner's principles and became an ardent Milnerite,⁵¹ while Milner wrote Fitzpatrick a private letter at the start of the South African War in which he discussed his private thoughts, something which Milner rarely did even with his closest friends.

Over time, Milner and Fitzpatrick's association grew. By 1901 Milner was regularly inviting Fitzpatrick to his otherwise sacrosanct Sundays for prolonged talks. Then at a dinner held at Fitzpatrick's home in 1902, Milner was the guest of honour and his speech praised Fitzpatrick as someone he counted on for support of his plans. In describing the incident in a letter to Julius Wernher, Fitzpatrick stated that "He made an acknowledgement which was generous in the extreme ... I wish I could tell you all he said but the personal references were so unexpected that they had a sort of stupefying effect on me and I have only a vague impression of the rest" (Cartwright, 1971: 124).

In 1902 Fitzpatrick was elected President of the Transvaal Chamber of Mines. Milner had hinted that Eckstein's should use its influence to have Fitzpatrick appointed President and so bring the

⁵¹ This was a lifelong choice. In 1926, when Milner visited South Africa, Fitzpatrick though very ill, travelled to Cape Town and wrote a tribute to Milner's life work (Fitzpatrick, 1932: 22).

Chamber into close cooperation with the Transvaal government. By the end of his term, Fitzpatrick was also serving as a nominated member of the newly appointed Legislative Council of the Transvaal and acting as Milner's unofficial adviser. Milner also appointed him to the Inter-Colonial Council, through which Fitzpatrick supported Farrar's motion on the importation of Chinese labour (Cartwright, 1971: 126).

By 1904, the demand for self-government by the Boer/Afrikaner population had spread widely. Milner and those in his circle were concerned that this was increasingly likely, and if self-government were granted to the Transvaal, then it would also need to be given to the Orange River. It was common knowledge that if the Liberals returned to power in Britain, they intended to give responsible government. At the same time, Sir Alfred Lyttleton, Chamberlain's successor at the Colonial Office, was planning a new constitution. Either way, Milner's grand vision was of an imperial federation of the British Empire and South Africa was to be his contribution to this empire, and it was increasingly clear that this would not happen.

To undermine the demand for self-government, Milner proposed that the election that needed to be held should be replaced by nominations to a Legislative Council.⁵² This was a result of the knowledge that Boers/Afrikaners numerically outnumbered English-speaking South Africans. In an elected Council they would also have a small majority, but this could be counterbalanced by placing unofficial members in the Legislature to give English-speakers the majority. On 8 July 1904, Milner announced that the Transvaal constitution would be amended. The 1904 census showed that half the voters were concentrated on the Witwatersrand, and that the delineation of constituencies on the basis of voter numbers would put power into towns and an English-speaking population even though they were in an overall minority (Le May, 1965: 164; Headlam, 1931: 528). Fitzpatrick supported this, immediately beginning a campaign to have the constituencies delimited on the basis of counting only the heads of those qualified to vote (Cartwright, 1971: 140).

In November 1904, two English-speaking parties were formed in Johannesburg, the Transvaal Progressive Association and the Transvaal Responsible Government Association. The Progressives were led by George Farrar (whose main collection of letters is discussed in Chapter 3), and were largely viewed as representing the interests of the mining industry and the English-speaking political elite. The binding sentiment of the Progressives was fear of Boer/Afrikaner nationalism. The Responsibles believed that the Boers/Afrikaners should be worked with, with the ultimate goal of self-government. It was these two parties that represented and divided English-speaking South Africans. The third major party, *Het Volk*, represented the majority

⁵² The Legislative Council was composed of fifteen official and fourteen unofficial members. Nine of the unofficial members were English-speakers who wielded unofficial weight. Fitzpatrick was the first post-war president of the Chamber of Mines, George Farrar was the second president (Denoon, 1973: 162-163).

interests of Boers/Afrikaners and aimed for the reunion of Boer/Afrikaner populations and self-government.

On 5 December 1904, Milner submitted his proposals on the franchise and constituencies. They enfranchised most of the male adult urban population where English-speaking South Africans were in the majority, and excluded some in the countryside, where Boers/Afrikaners dominated. Consequently, the number and distribution of seats was the next point of contention, and this was determined by the way in which constituencies were drawn up. The constitution as proposed by the Commission provided for an elected Council of between thirty and thirty-five members, and single-member constituencies, as determined by electoral commissioners.

In 1905, Milner left South Africa, with Lord Selborne⁵³ replacing him as the Governor of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, and with the knowledge his plans had not been successful. The Transvaal had not been transformed into an outpost for Britain. The Boers/Afrikaners had neither been subdued nor persuaded to accept the Empire. He had also failed to consolidate and to inspire the English-speaking population. The enthusiasm Milner evoked from his colleagues did not extend far beyond the small circle of the Britain-appointed administration, although their admiration was high (Le May, 1965: 175).

With Milner out of the picture, his followers and supporters attempted to continue his work. The Progressive leaders wanted the number of elected members to be increased from thirty-five to fifty: in a larger assembly, there would be a greater preponderance of members from the Witwatersrand, where the Progressives' strength was concentrated. Selborne recommended this to the British Government on the grounds that it would diminish the chance of a fresh controversy over the franchise and the constituencies when the constitution was altered to provide for responsible government. The British cabinet did not decide on self-government for the Transvaal and the Orange Free State until 8 February, and did not announce the decision until the King's speech at the opening of Parliament on 19 February 1906. The Liberal government decided that the question of the constituencies – who voted and where – was so important that it required a Commission to decide this. In March, Prime Minister Campbell Bannerman appointed the West Ridgeway Commission to report on the form of franchise most suitable to the Transvaal.

The first document from 1906 throws interesting light on matters.⁵⁴ Fitzpatrick was waiting on the King's speech and doing whatever he could to find out the Government decision. Abe Bailey tried to use his connection with Cartwright, who was a *Star* newspaper correspondent at the time,

⁵³ Selborne was no less determined than Milner to uphold 'imperial interests'. His duty as he saw it drew him towards the 'British Party'.

⁵⁴ Dep.191. fol. 79- 92.

to find out any information, as well as a Mr. Chirroll, who was to send word as soon as anything was known.

In his letter dated 19 February 1906, Fitzpatrick comments on the differences between Milner as 'Chief' and Selborne, noting that he had not seen the latter for a week. Also at a dinner at Government House with the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, Selborne made "little use of his opportunity to get the right impressions and right information into so valuable a potential ally as the King's brother". Fitzpatrick then provides Wernher with a detailed discussion of the exchanges regarding the King's brother, the Duke of Connaught, visiting a mine, which Fitzpatrick assumed Wernher would have heard about from Lionel Phillips. Fitzpatrick was frustrated by the lack of opportunity to discuss the constitutional issues with the Duke. Fitzpatrick eventually managed to speak to the Duke about Het Volk trying to gain control of power and determine the terms of federation. When he heard about this, Selborne was critical, saying the Duke should have heard it from him and not Fitzpatrick. In writing to Wernher, Fitzpatrick criticized Selborne for not recognizing his influence, stressed Selborne's inexperience, and stated that "Milner never missed opportunities of this kind, and never needed to be reminded. Few people know how enormously he increased his influence and power by the way in which he secured the presentation of certain aspects on certain questions by all sorts of people who, in their own way, big or small, were able to give evidence or express opinions that would support it". Fitzpatrick also criticizes Farrar because in discussions about cooperation with the Responsibles, instead of conveying the Progressive position to them, he went to Rhodesia and intended to see Solomon, leader of the Responsibles, only after he returned.

In the meantime, there was prolonged discussion about the form of government. In the Transvaal, the three main parties all wanted a larger assembly than provided for in the Lyttleton constitution. As a result, in April 1906 the British Government sent a constitutional committee to find a solution to the constitutional deadlock. Its members examined nearly 500 witnesses and received more than 70 depositions (Le May, 1965: 197). The committee wanted a way to distribute power evenly, to find local agreement on a broad administration which would be under the control neither of Het Volk nor the Progressive Association. This brought them into disagreement not only with George Farrar and Percy Fitzpatrick but also Selborne. The committee ultimately proposed to the parties that there should be a legislative assembly of sixty-three members, twenty-nine from the Witwatersrand, five from Pretoria, and twenty-nine from the rest of the Transvaal. Het Volk and the Responsibles agreed, the Progressives protested and, when their protest was disregarded, sent a deputation to London which urged, without success, that another seat should be given to the Witwatersrand.

A letter about these matters is dated 7 May 1906.⁵⁵ This is a 21-page informal letter from Fitzpatrick to Wernher, conveying someone writing to an old friend. Fitzpatrick had spent the week in Pretoria trying to close the ranks of English-speaking South Africans. He once again criticizes Farrar, pointing out that an important Progressive meeting had almost failed because Farrar changed his mind at the last minute, abandoning his intention to deal with the meeting's agenda and instead taking the chair so he would not have to speak. Fitzpatrick then claims that Farrar had altered arrangements, "capsizing everybody", but that Fitzpatrick's political skill had saved the day. Clearly working together and sharing political ambitions did not necessarily mean agreement or approval.

What now follows is the discussion of two letters in some detail, letters which raise different aspects of the figurational connections involved and how they worked in practice.

PRE-TEXT 1

The first letter for discussion is dated 11 June 1906. Dictated by Fitzpatrick and headed private, it has been signed by a secretary in his absence. Prior letters, dated 28 May 1906 and 4 June 1906, provide the pre-text to this.

Fitzpatrick had been sending Wernher many letters, for in his letter of 28 May he states that his (Fitzpatrick's) absence to Lydenburg had given Wernher a rest. In a Monday 4 June letter, Fitzpatrick once again updates Wernher on ongoing negotiations with the constitutional committee. It attaches a memorandum Fitzpatrick had sent to Lionel Phillips, updating him on what Fitzpatrick was doing in Pretoria. This included securing population figures, smoothing over controversy over Chinese labour, and spreading rumours amongst people he knew that exaggerated the Progressive strength. The 4 June letter continues with Fitzpatrick describing how the constitutional committee had spoken with Farrar and Bailey individually in search of a compromise, and that both thought that the British Government had put pressure on Selborne to reach a settlement, which is why the committee had abandoned their tour and returned to Pretoria to meet Smuts concerning Het Volk. The committee then requested a meeting with Fitzpatrick to reach a compromise, which Fitzpatrick states he will not do.

The letter of 4 June 1906 also updates Wernher on another letter Fitzpatrick had received from the committee concerning Het Volk. Fitzpatrick describes how Bailey had "pinned Selborne right down" and questioned him. This is followed by quoting a letter to Winston Churchill⁵⁶ asking for the protection of British interests in South Africa. Fitzpatrick also suggests that instruction had been given to the committee and Selborne that they must reach a settlement, while Fitzpatrick

⁵⁵ Dep. 191. Fol. 14 - 40.

⁵⁶ Churchill was at the time in a junior Ministerial role as Under-Secretary of State for the Colonial Office with the recently installed Liberal government. His first task was drafting a constitution for the Transvaal.

wants the Progressives to fight. His reason is that “if we could secure the four extra seats I think it makes British policy absolutely safe and relieves it of those risks to the industry and the whole community in their business life, which would be a constant menace and a cause of paralysis for years here”. This may indicate an interwoven factor which ties Wernher into the narrative, which is that British rule might provide a more business friendly environment and thus many Randlords support British rule.

Later in his letter Fitzpatrick mentions Milner again. At a speech given to the committee, Milner and Selborne’s names were mentioned, and “Selborne’s expression of regret for absence did not evoke a single sound; whereas, a casual mention of Milner’s name by Quinn evoked a succession of cheers such as I have not heard since he received his ovations in person”. Fitzpatrick also provides a very personal message to Wernher towards the end of the letter, stating that “I can only ask you to believe that every single word that you have written is present to mind; that I agree entirely with all you have said about coming to terms provided it does not mean surrender; that nothing has been done without the gravest thought and deliberation; and that I believe the steps taken by us were the best calculated to bring about the settlement which you desire”.⁵⁷

THE FIRST TEXT

1 PRIVATE⁵⁸

2 11th June, 1906.

3 Sir Julius Wernher, Bart.,

4 London.

5 My Dear Wernher,

6 I have your letter of the 19th May. The pace is very hot just now, and during the last week or so has begun
7 to tell upon me. When one gets irritable and easily drawn and unable to sleep properly it is time to get out
8 for a bit, and I want a break of a few days anyhow.

9 As to going home, I booked passages in two streamers, but really only as a piece of bluff to try and stir up
10 the committee and show them that we are in earnest. I do not think it would be wise to leave before they
11 do. Anyhow, a most annoying law case has been put down for the 22nd, and I must stay for that.

12 Your news about Beit has been the greatest possible relief to us; otherwise we have not had much to be
13 thankful for.

14 I enclose copies of letters to and from the Committee, and one to Lord Selborne which will show you that
15 we are concentrating our efforts on an immediate settlement, first division of constituencies on the present

⁵⁷ Dep. 192. Fol. 112.

⁵⁸ Dep. 192. Fol. 135-138.

16 roll. This would give us a certain British majority, although a small one, and would terminate the suspense.
 17 I do not suppose we shall pull it off; but there is still an alternative which we have not named but are
 18 endeavouring to get Selborne to advocate, viz.- the opening of the roll for additions only. That, whilst giving
 19 the Boers what they ask for in the permanent conditions of the constitution, would not give them also all
 20 the benefits of the crisis, which they and the Liberals have provoked and prolonged.

21 Farrar came back from Bloemfontein and worried us a good deal by his procrastination and hesitation. The
 22 time in which to act was very short as it was, and his action has lost us five or six days. There is no
 23 unpleasantness resulting, however; but the additional strain and worry of having to drive one's own people
 24 seems a bit unnecessary.

25 George was not able to extract anything more from Lord Selborne that I got out of him. He continued to sit
 26 on the fence; and we can make nothing of it. Farrar's judgement is that Selborne has had positive
 27 instructions to bring about a settlement on the terms proposed to us; and that his own choice would have
 28 been not to do so, but to take the principle and see it out. Anyhow, the result has been that we have been
 29 left without guidance or help of any sort from the quarter where we had the best right to expect it. We have
 30 had to see it through all on our own. Perhaps things may turn out to be none the worse for this.

31 I do not think it is necessary to add anything to our letters to the committee.

32 I was very glad to see what Lord Milner says about the War Contribution. Of course, there would not be
 33 the ghost of a chance of carrying anything of that nature now, and we won't know until after the Natal
 34 business is over what other liabilities may fall upon us, but if anything is to be done, it is certainly best that
 35 it should be done in the form of reinvestment in the country.

36 To refer again to going home, it may be necessary, or at any rate useful, but one can form no opinion as
 37 everything may change in the next week or two. If the elections are to come off within three months, of
 38 course, it is out of the question; on the other hand, if the decision is not to be taken until the Committee get
 39 home we ought to marshal all our forces to influence a settlement then. I am too tired to write any more;
 40 indeed, I do not think there is anything more to say.

41 With kindest regards,

42 Yours sincerely,

43 For J. Percy Fitzpatrick.

44 Note.- Sir Percy has left the office for the day; hence this letter is not under his personal signature.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ All these letters from Fitzpatrick were dictated and most probably written out by his private secretary of 28 years, A.J. Wright.

ANALYSIS 1

This letter begins (line 6) with Fitzpatrick referring to Wernher by just his surname, implying an informal and equal relationship between them. It was written in response to a letter from Wernher (line 7), probably giving his views on the ongoing political negotiations. Given the frequency of letters from Fitzpatrick, it seems that they communicated often and were not only joined by business interests but also similar political concerns. Fitzpatrick appears a key source of information for Wernher, and while they were close socially, it also seems that Wernher was one notch up from Fitzpatrick, who had worked for him for many years. Fitzpatrick continues with his physical and emotional state (lines 7-8) and that the ongoing negotiations were taking their toll on him. Telling how someone is coping is often only shared with those who are personally close, so the letter comes across as Fitzpatrick sharing information with a close friend with similar interests and views, and not a formal organisational communication.

Fitzpatrick begins line 10 with “going home”. Fitzpatrick, unlike many other Randlords, viewed South Africa as home. He was at this time in London to put his views to as many members of the House of Commons as possible, along with Abe Bailey and Wilhem Van Hulsteyn. They made this trip because the commission had given thirty-three seats to the Witwatersrand, six to Pretoria, and thirty to the rest of the Transvaal. The Progressives protested and sent Fitzpatrick and the deputation to try and gain an additional seat for the Witwatersrand (Le May, 1965:201).

Fitzpatrick also states he is happy to play any part he can. His level of determination is unusual. While he had been invited to stand for a seat in Pretoria, this does not explain his activity in the negotiations. It may have been for an enjoyment in politics, but it was more likely that Fitzpatrick felt he was fighting for something larger than himself, for ‘the British’ in South Africa, and for the Milner figuration which he felt emotionally bonded to, against a Liberal government which he felt was not acting in the best interests of this. Fitzpatrick then states that the news about Beit (lines 13-14) has been a relief to ‘us’, here probably referring to those at the top of the Progressive party and that Beit’s health had improved. However, Beit would die just over a month later (16 July 1906), on the day of Fitzpatrick’s arrival in London, and Fitzpatrick was only just in time for his funeral (Fitzpatrick, 1932: 28).

Fitzpatrick then states he has enclosed copies of correspondence with the Commission (line 15). A 6 June 1906 communication is to Fitzpatrick, Roy, Soutter, Dumat and Bailey, and is a response to a letter they had sent on 31 May 1906. These exchanges assigned to the other side misconceptions about what was happening. The bottom line is that the Commission had by this stage accepted that an amicable settlement would not be reached, as any fair compromise meant a loss to the Progressive party.

The letter dated 9 June 1906 to Selborne is unsigned, but content indicates it comes from Fitzpatrick. It begins by stating that a ‘we’ was unable, due to Selborne’s absence, to make a public deputation. It continues that it represents the views of “practically the whole of the British section of the population”. Its argument is that the constitutional uncertainty has damaged the local economy and caused the emigration of many, and that the British government should come to an immediate settlement based on the old ward system and the voters roll so that “anxiety and suffering be terminated” and to avoid Het Volk gaining complete control of the Government.⁶⁰ In lines 17 to 21, Fitzpatrick comments again on Selborne pushing the idea that votes be based on the number of valid voters, not exclude those who had left, and include British troops still stationed in the Transvaal.

The following paragraph (lines 22-25) has to do with Fitzpatrick’s views of Farrar. Fitzpatrick states that Farrar’s “procrastination and hesitation” (line 22) caused “us” worry. The limitation on time Fitzpatrick refers to is the time the Commission was in South Africa. Fitzpatrick then states that the “additional strain and worry of having to drive one’s own people seems a bit unnecessary” (line 24-25). Farrar was in many ways Fitzpatrick’s closest equal in terms of political motivations, figurational dynamics and social status, and his statement suggests that Farrar did not feel the same sense of commitment to the franchise issue as Fitzpatrick. While there was the idea of a united Progressive Party which in turn represented the English-speaking population, the challenge to the committee was solely driven by Fitzpatrick. Not only were English-speaking voters disunited, but within the Progressive Party there was no united front pushing this issue. Indeed, with Milner out of the picture, it seems that many had accepted the gradual demise of British influence in Southern Africa before it had occurred. Fitzpatrick, driven by British imperial ideals and the vision gained from Milner, did not accept this and largely alone was fighting for an idea and figuration which had already lost much cohesion and strength.

Farrar had been trying to gain information from Selborne (line 26), which Fitzpatrick had attempted as well. They were clearly hounding Selborne, who was seeking a compromise, and while he may have sympathised with them, he was trying to balance the interests of the different players. Fitzpatrick then states that they had been “left without guidance or help of any sort from the quarter where we had the best right to expect it. We have had to see it through all on our own”, which once more seems to imply a deficiency in Farrar’s well as Selborne’s leadership.

This indicates a fundamental underlying assumption, that Fitzpatrick believed in unity of a figuration that simply did not exist, including that Selborne should act in British interests, and that the British Government should support British interests, in Southern Africa. However, the new Liberal government did not take this view, and more generally the older ideas of Empire

⁶⁰ This letter had been edited after typing with pen, and that ‘the Boers’ was replaced with ‘Het Volk’ throughout.

were fading. Fitzpatrick's comment that "we have had to see it through on our own" (line 30-31) is from the only Progressive who was sticking so strongly to this line.

POST-TEXT 1

In the main, the British Government accepted the West Ridgeway recommendations, but rejected the proposal to hold referenda. There was to be an Assembly of sixty-nine members and a second chamber, a Legislative Council of fifteen, nominated in the first instance by the Governor with the approval of the Colonial Secretary. There was to be manhood suffrage for whites only, biennial registration of voters, and the automatic redistribution of constituencies by three commissioners to be appointed by the Governor-in-Council. Speeches in the legislature might be in either English or Dutch, Bills and votes and proceedings were to be published in both languages, but English was to be the language of record. This was another defeat for Milnerism (Le May, 1965: 207-208).

Elections to the Assembly were held on 22 February 1907. Het Volk won the election with 39% of the votes, followed by the Progressives with 29%, then a number of smaller British parties such as the independents (13%), the Nationalists (10%), and Labour (9%). The Responsible Government Association, renamed the National Association, had formed a pact with Het Volk. This gave them a majority (49%), with the expectation that the premiership would go to Richard Solomon. However, Fitzpatrick had stood against Solomon for South Central Pretoria and won. Lord Elgin refused to invite a defeated candidate to form a ministry, and as a result Louis Botha became Prime Minister. Ironically, Fitzpatrick's success had given the Premiership to the leader of Het Volk.

PRE-TEXT 2

The second item discussed here has some of the attributes of a letter and some of a legal document and is dated 26 November 1909. It concerns the sale and leasing back of a farm. The property under discussion is Buckland Downs.

In 1907, Fitzpatrick left the Corner House after 16 years. It was his decision to leave and made because politics fascinated and business bored him. He was not able, between 1903 and 1907, to give much attention to the firm's affairs. An illness and his political activities, carried out with the full approval of his partners, had been time-consuming. However, Fitzpatrick was concerned about how he would make money after leaving business and wanted an assured income. He was notoriously bad with money and was at this time £35,000 in debt to the company, which he could not pay, and which Wernher settled for him.

Fitzpatrick needed, in other words, funding for his political goals and his Randlord lifestyle. Shortly before Rhodes had died, he had convinced Rhodes that he should give up business

altogether and co-operate with Jameson in a programme designed to bring many British settlers to South Africa. When Fitzpatrick said that he would be prepared to do this if his children's future was assured, Rhodes seemingly replied "that money would be forthcoming, any amount, two million" – or at least that was Fitzpatrick's recollection. But when Rhodes died, there was no provision for immigration in his Will. Fitzpatrick hoped that Alfred Beit might make this good but was disappointed. Beit made generous provision for Rhodesia and left Jameson £250,000, but not the "ample funds" he was said to have promised for the immigration scheme (Cartwright, 1971: 159). Wernher then came up with the plan that, when Rhodes, Beit and Wernher had bought Life Governorships in De Beers, it was agreed that part of this income would be devoted to public work including political purposes. The management of this was meant to fall on the Rhodes Trustees, but as some of the Trustees did not approve of political involvement, it was necessary to create a different fund. As both Rhodes and Beit had now died, and as Wernher was part-owner of these funds, he proposed the arrangement discussed in this letter.

THE SECOND TEXT

- 1 To⁶¹
- 2 SIR JULIUS WERNHER BART: and Mr. B.F. Hawksley.
- 3 Dear Sirs,
- 4 In pursuance and confirmation of the Agreement by us in 1907 for the sale by me to you and the purchase
- 5 by you from me of my Farm known as Buckland Down in the Orange River Colony for £50,000 and interest
- 6 thereon at the rate of 10% per annum from 1st July 1907 until payment of the purchase money I HEREBY
- 7 DEPOSIT with you the title deeds of the Farm as per Schedule at foot and undertake at any time at your
- 8 request in writing to execute a formal transfer of the Farm to you for registration in the proper Office of the
- 9 Orange River Colony. I admit that all interest on the £50,000 has been paid down to and including 30th June
- 10 last and that future payments are to be made half-yearly on each 31st December and 30th June. The purchase
- 11 money is not to be paid until my death unless you so desire and give me one year's notice thereof on the
- 12 expiration of which notice I must accept payment, complete sale, and give up possession. Meanwhile I am
- 13 to remain in occupation of the Farm at a rent of £1,000 per annum payable half yearly on the above half-
- 14 yearly dates the tenancy to be determinable by one year's notice on either side.
- 15 Be so good as to confirm the foregoing.
- 16 DATED this 26th November 1909.

⁶¹ Dep. 468. Fol. 56.

ANALYSIS 2

The letter is addressed (line 2) to Wernher and a Mr. B.F. Hawksley. Not much has been written on Hawksley, but he was a close associate of Cecil Rhodes, acted as solicitor for the BSAC and became a member of the Trustees of the Rhodes Trust. The letter being directed to both indicates it concerns an arrangement that involved the Rhodes Trust. Line 4 shows it is concerned with finalising an arrangement made in 1907, over two years prior to it being written, transferring title deeds and registering the transfer (line 7-8). It is mentioned that it is “my farm” and as Fitzpatrick owned Buckland Down at this time, the document is clearly from him. While the word is not actually used, the aim was that Wernher and Hawksley would create a ‘Trust’ which would theoretically buy Fitzpatrick’s farm from him for £50,000 (line 5) though actually holding it as nominal security, but this sum would only be paid after Fitzpatrick’s death (line 10-11). This money was in fact never to be his but held in trust for his children. This Trust, however, would provide Fitzpatrick with 10% interest paid half yearly (lines 5-6), or a flat income of about £6000 a year. However, Fitzpatrick had to hire the farm for £1,000 a year, making his flat income £5000 while being allowed to continue inhabiting the farm (line 12-13).

The reason for the formation of the Trust is as follows. It was viewed necessary, by both parties, that Fitzpatrick should make a clear break from business interests in going into politics. In a letter from Wernher to Fitzpatrick in 1906, Wernher states this clearly: “your connection with our firm would not be in our interest and would have weakened your hand. I need hardly repeat how deeply we shall feel the separation after all these years of close ties through years of worry and anxiety and we hope that your services will still benefit is by your devotion to the interests of the whole community. At the same time it is clearly understood that you are perfectly independent and free from any tie whatever. Were there any other intentions this separation would not have become necessary” (Cartwright, 1971: 160).

According to Cartwright (1971: 145), the Fitzpatricks used Buckland as a holiday house. It was designed by Herbert Baker, and they did not have any servants there. In October 1902 Fitzpatrick had bought this 5,000-acre farm at the price of £10,000. In fact this was a sum that would have bought five farms in the Transvaal at the time, so there is something of a mystery about why it cost so much until Wernher’s plan is brought into frame, along with the likelihood that other sums of money were changing hands as well. The farm had been devastated during the war and had no fencing or livestock. However, Fitzpatrick planted hundreds of trees, imported game from Europe and bred horses. The result was that the farm was both a massive financial liability for the rest of his life and the means of ensuring support for his family when he died (Cartwright, 1971: 119-120), and the Trust bailed him out.

POST-TEXT 2

After the 1907 elections, Fitzpatrick spent some time in Cape Town but was soon called back to work due to a campaign for Union following local autonomy. Fitzpatrick hoped that his efforts could lead to the colonies maintaining their own assemblies, but with an overarching central government. He and Milner remained in regular private correspondence during this period and Fitzpatrick described his colleagues as weak and compromising too easily (Wallis, 1955: 133).

Fitzpatrick had been heavily engaged with the National Convention on Union. After Union in 1910, he could no longer use the funds, personnel, newspaper contacts or office space of his former employers, the Ecksteins, and the new leaders of the Progressives were keeping him out of their inner circle. He resigned from the party in 1910. Staying true to his promise to Rhodes, Fitzpatrick remained a support for Jameson, who had been the leader of the Progressive Party in the Cape and later its Prime Minister between 1904 and 1908, and then post-Union leader of the Unionist Party, a merger between a number of parties including the Progressives with a particular interest in protecting the mining industry.

SUCCEEDING CONTEXT

The Wernher letters part of the Milner collection suggest a number of figural dynamics and characteristics. Based on the letters from Wernher to Milner, they had a distant relationship, though their political and economic goals aligned and they depended on each other in important ways. Wernher depended on Milner because the success of Milnerism was favourable to Wernher's business interests, while Milner depended on the mining industry dominated by Wernher and associates to achieve his broad goals in Southern Africa. These letters, however, show more than this.

The majority of the letters are actually from Fitzpatrick to Wernher, and these in turn show further figural dynamics including with Lord Selborne, Abe Bailey, George Farrar, and more broadly imperial interests in South Africa. Fitzpatrick was by all measures a Milnerite, modelling his political thinking on Milner, working with Milner as an advisor, becoming a close friend, and looking up to Milner as a higher figure within a particular political and ideological figuration. At the same time, Fitzpatrick's rise can largely be attributed to his initial links with Beit and shortly after Wernher, with whom he built a close relationship over time. For over ten years Fitzpatrick had sent Wernher detailed political and economic information and comment in letters written in the epistolary style of close friendship, advising him about important changes that were occurring. As an important source of information, and being a central part of two crucial figurations, Fitzpatrick's letters were shared by Wernher with Milner because their goals if not their primary interests very much overlapped.

The constitutional crisis of 1906-1907 was for the Milnerite figuration very much a one-man show, with Fitzpatrick the primary figure. Wernher did not directly involve himself with this, but gave Fitzpatrick the support to push a particular Milner-infused British imperial cause. Unrealised by Fitzpatrick, the figuration he believed he belonged to had since the South African War largely atrophied. Without Milner in Southern Africa, there was no longer a figurehead who represented this, and his successor, Selborne, did not have the skill or desire to do so. The new Liberal government in Britain ended Fitzpatrick's claims to have support from Britain. In South Africa, English-speaking voters were divided between three different parties, one of which had a pact with *Het Volk*. Within his own party, his closest equal, George Farrar, was conceding the ground Fitzpatrick was fighting for. The figuration was largely redundant, and every political strategy to produce a more favourable voting scheme (using different populations estimates, the drawing up of constituencies, and the number of representatives) that Fitzpatrick attempted as a last ditch attempt to save an idea he believed in failed. At the same time, the rising Afrikaner nationalism increased in cohesion, with the 1907 election of *Het Volk* politically and symbolically marking the end of Milnerism in South Africa.

What do these letters in the Wernher sub-section of the Milner Collection add to the picture of figuration being built up across this chapter? There seems to have been different degrees and kinds of allegiance in a figuration inhering around Milner and what he stood for in terms of a local version of the imperial project. The letters show that while Milner had lost his position in South Africa and was politically out of the picture, he still played a role as a mentor correspondent for Fitzpatrick, and the legacy of his ideas and work still remained for at least some people. Certainly Fitzpatrick had a close emotional, ideological and social bond with Milner, which characterised his whole political career. He was very much a part of the Milnerite figuration, and was one of the few who tried to maintain this even when there was little or no chance of success.

Remembering that these letters are signalled as from Wernher to Milner, and that Fitzpatrick was also a part of another figuration, the Corner House/Eckstein's, they also demonstrate something interesting about figurational aspects here too. This figuration was largely responsible for Fitzpatrick's rise, occurring initially within the business world. These letters in fact show that these two figurations overlapped in part. It is an often recited 'fact' that the Progressives represented the interests of the mining industry, while the letters discussed show a more complex picture. Fitzpatrick is sending constant updates to Wernher, which were in turn sent to Milner, and this shows a close association between these groups, on a social, ideological and interest basis.

In addition, a hovering presence in the background is Rhodes. Rhodes was the most successful Randlord in bridging the divide between finance and a brand of imperialism close to Milnerism, though his particular version placed himself at least equally into the picture. It seems that Rhodes

had perhaps guaranteed Fitzpatrick a lifetime financial security, a guarantee which Beit had also made, and Wernher followed through on in very practical ways that were in effect money-laundering. This suggests a strong figurational dynamic between these men in that all of them were willing to support Fitzpatrick financially in his political aspirations, and it also emphasises the close relationship between their economic and their political interests.

THE ROTHSCHILD LETTERS

CONTEXT

Writing about the Rothschilds is difficult, for as a banking firm and as individuals they operated in the context of absolute discretion. Indeed, Nathaniel Mayer Rothschild, whose Milner letters are the focus in this section, ordered that his papers be destroyed after his death, with few of his correspondences still in existence (Cooper, 2015: 1). While some helpful accounts have been written on the Rothschilds (Ferguson, 1998; Cooper, 2015), most are speculation and conspiracy focused. Such works are mainly written without the Rothschilds' agreement (Ferguson's work being a rare exception), often against their wishes, and sometimes they protested in court (Landes, 2006: 37-73). Milner makes no mention of the Rothschilds in his 1892 book, *England in Egypt*, but nonetheless there were interesting connections, which in the event lasted for more than twenty years.

Egypt at the time had been in a state of financial chaos for years,⁶² largely due to the ambition of the Khedive (its viceroy under Turkish rule), Ismail. His most ambitious project was the construction of the Suez Canal, which the British Government refused to fund, believing it was an engineering impossibility and anyway would disrupt the balance of power in the Levant (Wilson, 1988: 231-237). However, state bonds to finance the construction of the Canal were sold outside of Egypt from 1862. By 1872, British investors held more than half of this public debt (Cain, Hopkins, 2002: 312-313).

Importantly here, then-Prime Minister Disraeli had a fairly close relationship with Lionel Rothschild (1808-1879), Nathaniel's father, and regularly met at his house in Tring. Disraeli was trying to protect British capital and shipping, which was discriminated against when passing through the Canal.⁶³ Disraeli's solution was to buy shares in the Suez Canal, for which he needed Rothschilds help. In November 1875, Ismail, in need of funds, attempted to raise this on his major remaining asset – 44% share-holding in the Suez Canal Company. Rothschilds provided the £4

⁶² By 1876, the servicing of debt absorbed two-thirds of state revenues and half of export earnings.

⁶³ The Canal cut the distance between Britain and India by several weeks, and in 1875 four-fifths if its traffic was British.

million required to purchase these shares, with the bank lending the money at 5% interest with a 2.5% commission. Nathaniel Rothschild went to Paris to buy shares in the company on behalf of the British Government. These terms were accepted by the British Cabinet on 24 November. Because of the purchase, the Prime Minister was able to obtain the international commission he wanted to oversee Egypt's finances and to guarantee unhampered passage through the Canal (Wilson, 1988: 231-237). The Rothschilds made about £100,000 on the deal, equivalent to £10,000,000 today. They were charging, for a short-term loan to the strongest financial power in the world, a similar rate to what the Khedive had to borrow at in the last years before his financial collapse (Blake, 1966: 581-584).

By 1876, Egyptian finances were in such a mess again that its creditors, predominantly Great Britain and France, forced the Khedive to submit control of the economy to an international committee. Part of the British delegation was George Goschen,⁶⁴ head of a major banking house.⁶⁵ He was a delegate for British holders of Egyptian Bonds and negotiated the agreement of control over Egyptian finances. Milner was at this time working for the *Pall Mall Gazette*, which devoted much attention to the developing political crisis in Egypt. Goschen had an interest in Egypt after negotiating for the British bondholders, and he ultimately led Milner to Egypt. Milner became Goschen's private secretary in 1884 when the latter was Liberal MP for Ripon. After Randolph Churchill resigned as Chancellor of the Exchequer, Goschen was appointed Chancellor in 1887, with Milner as his private secretary. This post gave Milner the financial experience required to be asked in 1889 (on Goschen's recommendation) to become Director General of Accounts for Khedive Tewfik (Thompson, 2007: 22-23). In November 1889 Milner arrived in Cairo to take up his duties as number three in the Egyptian Ministry of Finance, under Palmer and Julius Blum. Milner spent the next two and a half years in Egypt.

THE LETTERS

The Milner Collection contains seven letters from the Rothschilds, as well as two telegrams. These are all from Nathaniel Mayer Rothschild (1840-1915). Nathaniel Rothschild took over the senior partnership of the Rothschilds' London Banking branch from his father (not all the Rothschilds were active in banking), he had a house in Tring from where a number of these letters were sent, and these letters are signed 'Rothschild'. When he became the first Jewish peer in 1885, he viewed this as a triumph for Jewish people and rejected the convention, in the manner of

⁶⁴ Goschen and Milner shared many political and imperial ideas, had similar family ties to Germany and valued principles above party attachments. Their relationship was critical in shaping Milner's political identity and prospects.

⁶⁵ In July 1876, the British Corporation of Foreign Bondholders (which acted as intermediary for most of the Egyptian loans) asked Goschen to represent the bondholders' interests in Egypt.

English nobility, to sign himself Tring. Instead the simple name ‘Rothschild’ was at the bottom of all his letters (Wilson, 1988: 301-302). All these letters have this signature.

The letters were sent over a 22-year period, from 1891 to 1913. Three are dated between 1 May 1891 and 31 July 1891, the following two between 6 September 1893 and 12 November 1893, a single letter was sent on 13 May 1895, two telegrams were sent in May 1901, and a final letter is dated in November 1913.

The first letter (Appendix 9) is dated 4 May 1891 from New Court, the banking house address. Rothschild thanks Milner for a letter and states he will see him soon. In April 1891, Milner took his first leave back to England, where he spent time engaging with the London press, his political friends, and promoting his view of Britain’s role in Egypt, which involved its continued occupation (Marlowe, 1976: 20-21). At his friend Reginald Brett’s house, Milner had met Nathaniel and Sally Rothschild and also WT Stead, who was in the process of introducing Milner to Rhodes. Stead later became the other executor of Rhodes’s Will with Milner (Thompson, 2007: 74-75). The letter indicates Milner and Rothschild were on terms of friendly association and Rothschild saw Milner as on a par with the elite men he entertained. Milner was third in the chain of exchequer power in Egypt. In this role, he did much of the executive work and in this regard probably had much correspondence with the Rothschilds, who were major creditors to the Egyptian state as well as the British Government. It is also notable that at this time (1891) Rhodes was the Prime Minister of the Cape, and had recently re-written his Will, with Rothschild as one of his executors, and with Rothschild also involved in funding Rhodes’s development of the BSAC, the Chartered Company that spearheaded much imperial expansion in Southern Africa.

The second letter (Appendix 10), on 31 July 1891, comments that Rothschild is “disgusted” by the reply from the Caisse⁶⁶ and that this is “only in keeping with the behaviour of those gentlemen on a great many previous occasions” (line 3-4). This suggests that Milner acted as a middle man between the Rothschilds and the Caisse, and that this was a longer-term correspondence. It also suggests the closeness of imperial administration in Egypt. That is, Milner was essentially, as a senior figure in the Exchequer, facilitating the Rothschilds’ ability to lend money to a state whose repayment was guaranteed by British administration, which was also lent funds by them. At the beginning of April 1892, Milner was offered, and accepted, the Chairmanship of the Board of Inland Revenue. By this time Milner was a prominent member of the establishment and friendly with political leaders of both government and opposition (Marlowe, 1976: 24).

The following brief letter of 6 September 1893 involves Rothschild and his wife inviting Milner to spend some days at Tring, to meet Joseph Chamberlain and his wife Mary, who were their

⁶⁶ In 1876 the Caisse de la Dette Publique (Commission of the Public Debt) was established for the service of the Egyptian debt. Its members were nominated by France, Britain, Austria, and Italy. In the same year, Egyptian revenue and expenditure were placed under the supervision of a British and a French controller (the Dual Control).

guests. This seems to indicate that Milner had established a long-term relationship with Rothschild. This was likely both a working relationship (as Milner assisted Rothschild for some years in loaning and investing money in Egypt), and a friendly social bond (as Rothschild invited Milner in his home on a number of occasions to meet with upper echelons of British society). The next letter, dated 12 November 1893, is again Rothschild inviting Milner to visit, this time for two days and not simply as a dinner guest. Milner was it seems highly regarded by Nathaniel Rothschild. Milner and Chamberlain just a few years later worked together, with Chamberlain Colonial Secretary when Milner was Cape Governor.

The next communication is a telegram, sent 24 May 1901 from Down St. to the S.S. Saxon, a steamship which Milner was taking from Cape Town to Southampton. This reached Milner as he arrived, as he was on leave before taking up duties as Administrator of the former Boer Republics. It expresses good wishes and wanting to see Milner. Sending the telegram was a social nicety; and as it is from both the Rothschilds, it indicates that they socially looked forward to seeing Milner. They shared, in other words, a social bond which had by this stage lasted over ten years. The following telegram, exact date unknown, was sent at the conclusion of the South African War, one of many congratulatory messages Milner received regarding the war's conclusion and Britain's victory.

The final letter, dictated and dated 12 November 1913, was sent to Milner well after he had returned to Britain and was chairman of the Rio Tinto Zinc Mining Company. Rio Tinto was a highly capitalized international venture from the time of its formation in 1873. By the 1880s the business had achieved a leading position in the world markets for sulphur and copper and was employing more than 9,000 people at its mining and metallurgical complex in southern Spain. The Rothschilds had had a controlling stake in it since 1889, when they opted to control the company directly through the chairmanship (Harvey, 1981: 2). However, because the company's voting stock consisted entirely of bearer shares, it is impossible to trace the process by which the family, acting as always in great secrecy, was able to become the dominant shareholder. The Rothschild passion for remaining behind the scenes meant that the extent of the family's voting control remained unsuspected by the public for many years, and its related dislike of putting too much on paper makes it difficult to gauge the extent to which the Rothschilds influenced Rio Tinto policy (Avery, 1974: 157-158). However, in 1904 they placed their employee Charles Fielding at its head and continued to impose their candidates for the post until the outbreak of the Second World War (Lopez-Morell & O'Kean, 2014).

By 1906, Milner had joined the peerage through his service in South Africa and was on the Boards of the London Joint Stock Bank, the Bank of West Africa, the Rio Tinto Company, and a mortgage company in Egypt. For the next few years he devoted a good deal of time to these directorships and visited Egypt almost every winter for a few weeks in connection with the affairs of the

mortgage company. There was also an increasing amount of public work and public speaking over various matters of public policy with which he was becoming identified – national service, imperial unity, and tariff reform were the most important. He also became extremely active as a Rhodes Trustee. He attended his first meeting of the Trustees in August 1905 and thereafter became the most active trustee (Marlowe, 1976: 178).

In his 12 November letter, Rothschild asks Milner to do something for a third party, to find employment for a young man, which Rothschild views as ‘a favour’. This is the letter now analysed in more detail.

THE TEXT

- 1 Dictated to SCN
- 2 New Court
- 3 St. Swithins Lane
- 4 London 12 Nov, 1913
- 5 Dear Lord Milner,
- 6 I have been asked by Lord Harris the Chairman of the Consolidated Gold fields of South Africa to interest
- 7 myself in a young man, Mr. Cuthbert Higgins whom he most strongly recommends. Mr Higgins is the son
- 8 of the Secretary of the Brewers Company, and speaks French and Spanish fluently, having also a knowledge
- 9 of German. He is desirous of finding some occupation which he can pursue as much as possible in the open
- 10 air. Do you think that there is an opening for a young man with such linguistic attainments in your
- 11 Company?
- 12 I should regard it as a favour if you would very kindly look into the matter, and thank you sincerely for any
- 13 trouble I am putting you to.
- 14 I remain,
- 15 Yours Sincerely,
- 16 Rothschild

ANALYSIS

This letter was sent from St. Swithins Lane, the London address of the Rothschild banking house. It was dictated to SCN, who was most likely Rothschild’s private secretary. It begins (lines 6-7) by Rothschild stating that Lord Harris⁶⁷ had asked him if he might have a job for a young man,

⁶⁷ David Harris was a distinguished soldier and administrator. He became a close friend of Cecil Rhodes and from 1897 to 1931 was a director of De Beers. He was a cousin of Rutherford Harris, a friend of Rhodes, secretary of the

Cuthbert Higgins, with proficiency in several European languages. Higgins, who was 21 at the time, was the son of William C. Higgins, the Company Secretary of the Brewers Company,⁶⁸ and lived in the affluent Hanover Square area of London.

It is likely that Cuthbert Higgins's father had asked Harris this same question, which was then passed on to Rothschild, followed by him approaching Milner. This chain is beyond what is usually due employees. It shows the existence of a string of individuals (son of the Secretary, Secretary of the Company, Harris, Rothschild, Milner) who each perceived that their economic and also social bond with the next was strong enough to ask for such a favour, which had nothing to do with a joint project or goal but was a personal favour. What is particularly unusual about it is that each individual assumes that the favour is important enough to ask the next person, when each of them was busy with fairly important other tasks. This seems to indicate that they had good relationships, that it was viewed as normal to ask for such favours, and common practice to assist one another.

This has several effects. A favour is often returned, and this reciprocity maintains and builds figurational relationships, provides advantages to those within networks, and if the occasion were to arise, a return of favour is built-in to expectations. Higgins being known to the Rothschilds brought his son opportunities and options denied to most people. Importantly, Rothschild is using his network, here specifically with Milner and so assuming a good working relationship with him, to find Higgins employment. There is a string of connections being tapped for inside favours. The letter ends with Rothschild's signature, indicating that this was dictated by him and not delegated to his secretary or an administrator.

Rothschild considers that language abilities, especially French, Spanish and German, might be useful to Milner in what Rothschild refers to as "your company". Rothschild may have been referring to the Rio Tinto Company. While the Rothschilds largely controlled the company, it was Milner as Chairman who did much of the executive work. Being a multinational company, these languages might well have been beneficial, especially Spanish given that Spain was where its mining was concentrated at the time. However, 1913 was when the reality of a coming European war was thought increasingly likely. Milner was in the process of publishing *The Nation and the Empire* (1913) which he used to promote his ideas on imperialism (and it was only in 1916 that Milner joined the War Office).

BSAC and part of the group of London speculators involved in Rhodesian ventures (Kubicek, 1979: 105; Cartwright, 1967:89-92). In 1897, Harris was elected to a seat in Parliament, which he held for 32 years.

⁶⁸ The Brewers Company was an association which regulated the price and practices of metropolitan beer in London and eliminated outside competition. It lobbied government, many of the brewers served in parliament, and in 1904, nearly one fifth of M.P.s and a quarter of all peers were connected to the industry, either as stockholders, trustees or directors (Gutzke, 1990: 79; Gourvish and Wilson, 1994).

It seems unusual that Harris had not provided Higgins with such a job, for doing such favours is likely to have been within his competence in the company. By 1913, Gold Fields had become a company with world-wide investments including the United States, Russia, Mexico, Colombia and Trinidad. It also seems odd that Harris would bother Rothschild with such a seemingly trivial issue. Perhaps Harris owed the Secretary of the Brewers Company a favour. Lord Harris was however busy, as Gold Fields was struggling, touching the lowest market valuation in the history of the company of £2 at the end of 1913 (Cartwright, 1967: 118).

In respects, then, the doing of favours between Milner and Rothschild had been reversed. Rothschild states here that he would “regard it as a favour” if Milner would help, as if to say either that it is a favour owed or that Rothschild now owed Milner a favour. This suggests they were in the habit of helping each other and that their relationship at this point is based on reciprocity. Rothschild also does not ask whether this would be possible or not, but assumes Milner would assist by thanking Milner “sincerely for any trouble I am putting you to”, prior to receiving any confirmation from him.

POST-TEXT

While the letter does reveal much about a network of individuals, how they assisted one another, and the type of assumptions they held about their relationships, it does not appear to have had any after effects, in the sense of action taken as a consequence. Just seven months later, the First World War would begin, and this impacted each of these men in different ways. Because of the war, Cuthbert Higgins joined the military and does not seem to have worked in the mining industry, attaining the rank of Second Lieutenant in a ‘good’ regiment before being killed in action in France on 1 July 1916, the first day of the Battle of the Somme, one of the bloodiest battles in human history. Milner, on the other hand, returned to the British government in 1914 to serve on various committees dealing with the First World War and became a member of the War Council in 1916. Rothschild, who had actively tried to avoid a European War, died on 31 March 1915, two years after the letter about Cuthbert Higgins was sent. Milner with Lloyd George, Lord Haldane, Herbert Samuel, and Lord Rosebery attended his burial service (Cooper, 2015: 346).

The letter indicates a number of figurational aspects through this micro event, which occurred at a point at which commercial, banking and imperial connections were all at play. It demonstrates that Milner was very much part of these things. The aspect which comes clearly into sight is the exchanges of favours, which maintained bonds and also family and personal positions in society. Notably, this series of Rothschild letters which this is part of indicate something further, that figurations frequently interact and indeed intersect with other figurations. The Rothschilds were a purely financial figuration, which matched almost entirely onto a family figuration which spread across much of Europe, and their concerns were capital accumulation and the management of

financial risk. Some of the ways in which they achieved these goals was by staying close to members of the British government through whom they gained information and exerted influence, who in turn protected the Rothschild's interests. And they also did this through the monopolization and control of industries, with a special emphasis on minerals. The Rothschilds come across as first and foremost an elite family figuration, in the case of the British Rothschilds embedded within the wider London-based political, administrative and finance elites.

But importantly, these overlapping figurations had sometimes different interests. The Wernher and Beit nexus remained largely a financially-focused interest. Rhodes was of course an important presence in this and has been presented as a challenge for the Rothschilds, because wanting to use his capital for his own ideological concerns instead of more narrowly-defined financial interests; Milner, although having a demonstrably good relationship with Nathaniel Rothschild, played his role as Cape Governor in such a way that this was a major factor in bringing about the South African War, something the Rothschilds had wanted to avoid. Such things provide interesting examples of the competing interests involved, although the different figurations overlapped.

Cain and Hopkins (2002) have suggested that 'gentlemanly capitalists' (with British imperialism being driven by the business interests of the City of London) exerted a powerful influence on government policy and decision-makers. The Rothschild family, Nathaniel Rothschild in particular, were prime examples of how gentlemanly capitalism played out in practice. An important aspect was access to information and resources either denied to others, or which reached them at a later date. Privileged information, from which large fortunes and high standing could flow, came principally from contacts with those who controlled the machinery of state. These were in turn rooted in face-to-face relationships and personal understandings.

Milner was such a contact for the Rothschilds, for Nathaniel Rothschild specifically. While they did share a social bond, what is likely to have been more important and initially have brought the social bond about was Milner's position in Egypt, where the Rothschild had loaned and invested a fortune (in all, the Rothschilds issued four Egyptian loans between 1885 and 1893, totalling £50 million, roughly £5 billion today). This gave them access to the heart of the administration that was running the country and making decisions which would impact the servicing of debts owed to them. Yet this was not a one-way relationship. Over time, Milner's frequent wining and dining with the Rothschilds and others in the same circle brought with it the status of association with the family, and opportunity to meet others in the upper echelons of society and government, thereby providing him with access to new opportunities and networks. It is also likely that Rothschild provided Milner with opportunities and information from which Milner could make good business and career decisions, and that this was done around oiling the social wheels in house-party weekends and dinners. That Milner became involved in the Egyptian Mortgage Company, and more interestingly in Rio Tinto, seems to indicate that his relationship with

Rothschild may well have had either a direct influence on this, or an indirect one by promoting his ability to gain such positions. From the glimpses provided here and in the research literature more widely, the Rothschilds network was a rather separate figuration in its own right, although in intersecting with and in Nathaniel Rothschild's case underpinning much of what the sometimes overlapping and sometimes separate figuration of the Randlords was concerned with.

SUCCEEDING CONTEXT

While these network connections also had clear long-term figural aspects, the onset of the First World War largely marked the end for these developing possibilities. Milner as a commanding presence at the centre of a grouping of men with allegiance to him and his views had largely ended by this point. Imperialism, on which 'gentlemanly' capitalists relied, had in an expansionist sense largely ended and would be further impacted by the results of the war. The majority of the Randlords had died by this point, and anyway as discussed earlier, they had been largely replaced by career administrators managing commercial enterprises based on earlier minerals discoveries. In the case of the Higgins men, Cuthbert Higgins was killed in July 1916, and his brother Wilfred in October of the same year, with their deaths symbolically bringing this figuration to an end.

THE FITZPATRICK LETTERS

Earlier discussion has shown a close working relationship between Fitzpatrick and Milner, one in which Milner represented the focal point of a figuration, with Fitzpatrick being one of its key members albeit at a different level. Given that most of the 'cast of characters' and main events have now been elaborated, the earlier approach of discussing every letter and focusing on a few now gives way to a more selective approach, in focusing down on figural aspects of the remaining sets of Randlord letters in the Milner Collection. I begin with what these Fitzpatrick letters suggest regarding the relationship between him and Milner, in particular the type of allegiance he offered to Milner and how it changed over time.

This sub-section of letters contains 76 items, composed of letters, memoranda and telegrams, as shown in Appendix 11. The large majority (59) were written by Fitzpatrick, followed by Milner (3), the Progressives (3), Otto Beit (2), T. Lawrence (1), and the Constitutional Committee (3) and the Progressives (3), and the final 2 are duplicates and were discussed in the previous section. Of letters by Fitzpatrick, the majority (42) were sent to Milner, and span a 23-year period from 1899 to 1922. The following analysis focuses on figural themes and issues regarding letters from three periods, the South African War (1899-1902), the Constitutional Debate (1905-1908), and the First World War (1913-1917).

TRACING THE CONNECTIONS

During the South African War period, Fitzpatrick sent Milner six letters dated 21 October 1899,⁶⁹ 23 December 1899,⁷⁰ 24 September 1901,⁷¹ 2 June 1902, 23 November 1902⁷² and 10 July 1903,⁷³ while the small number of letters from Milner to Fitzpatrick are dated 28 November 1899,⁷⁴ 26 October 1900,⁷⁵ 21 December 1902⁷⁶ They focus on the beginning of the South African War and Fitzpatrick's involvement in political matters. The first letter from Milner here succinctly outlines his doctrine on South Africa as a self-governing white community, and regarding language, finance, and how to deal with the Boers. He asks Fitzpatrick to not allow the letter to "get out", as it would then be treated as fixed settled policy. Clearly, Milner recognised Fitzpatrick as a 'follower', and by clarifying his views to him he was also ensuring that this key follower would have the same goals. It also suggests that Milner thought that Fitzpatrick might gain – or be given – the power to influence things Milner was concerned with. Overall, these ideas were to shape Fitzpatrick's beliefs and activities from then on.

The following letter from Milner, dated 25 October 1900, concerns the South African War and Light Horse regiments (one of which Fitzpatrick helped establish) refusing to allow refugees to return to Johannesburg from Cape Town. The tone is direct and business-like, a senior speaking to a junior. The final letter from Milner, dated 21 December 1902, takes a similar tone and wants Fitzpatrick's reassurance respecting the attitudes of mines companies towards the establishment of a factory in England. Notably, in all three letters Milner keeps a firm but kind distance from Fitzpatrick.

The 1906 constitutional crisis and 1907 elections have been discussed earlier in the chapter. The bulk (20) of Fitzpatrick's letters to Milner were sent during this period; they provide detailed accounts of ongoing negotiations and Fitzpatrick reports his success in achieving their joint goals. There are no letters from Milner to Fitzpatrick during this time. A very noticeable feature is less their political aspects and more Fitzpatrick's frequent expressions of loyalty and flattery. For example, a telegram sent on 24 March 1906 says: "Our faith is unshaken and our loyalty and gratitude to you today greater than ever".⁷⁷ Notably, it does not contain any substantive purpose besides its expression of loyalty. Indeed, within the collection there are a number of such expressions; thus a telegram dated 21 February 1907 states: "this is my tribute to you on behalf

⁶⁹ 212. Fol. 391-396.

⁷⁰ 212. Fol. 552- 557A.

⁷¹ 215. Fol. 66.

⁷² 252. Fol. 30-30A.

⁷³ 216. Fol. 47- 48A.

⁷⁴ 220. Fol. 295-298

⁷⁵ 177. Fol. 176-182

⁷⁶ 177.fol. 183-184.

⁷⁷ Dep. 33. Fol. 76

of those who will your works”,⁷⁸ followed by one dated 27 February 1907 which simply states: “Most heartfelt gratitude never were your courage and help more needed here Phillips joins”.⁷⁹ Then almost a decade later Fitzpatrick sent another telegram on 11 December 1916,⁸⁰ simply stating “at last thank god”, most likely referring to Milner’s employment to the British War cabinet announced that month.

These messages not only show Fitzpatrick’s need to continually express his loyalty to Milner but suggests that he felt closely emotionally bonded to him; that through this he was actively working for something larger than himself; and that there was an ongoing struggle between the Milner figuration and outside forces. A letter which Fitzpatrick sent on 11 January 1907⁸¹ further corroborates this by stating that his “faith in the destiny is unshaken”; faith is an interesting choice of word, as it indicates a belief verging on religious fervour. Indeed, Fitzpatrick views his belonging to the Milner figuration as going against “the whole world”.

In the following letter, dated 28 October 1907⁸² Fitzpatrick states that “Robin showed me your long letter today and gave me a lump in the throat. I don’t feel like going under except it be “all standing”, but so much of what you say is overwhelmingly true. I want to read it all again & again...”. It indicates how deeply emotionally attached Fitzpatrick felt, that Milner’s words almost brought him to tears and he will not go under without a fight. He then in a childlike way states that he wants to “read it all again and again”, which is unusual from someone of his age and standing in subserving himself to Milner. The impression given is that Fitzpatrick receives great emotional gratification and meaning from serving Milner, and in adopting Milner’s perspective he continues to fight battles which Milner himself had given up on. This was so during the constitutional crisis and Fitzpatrick knew the odds were bad. But the emotional gratification he received was too great for him to let go.

This is further indicated by the following letter, dated 28 June 1908.⁸³ He writes, “So we are nearing “the last ditch” in the long struggle for British South Africa. Horray! Its over 12 years since we went to gaol for it... There is much to tote but I have no help now & feel that drag badly & am writing today because in the past emergency I turn naturally, as always in the past, to you.”. Here Fitzpatrick mentions the failed Jameson Raid to indicate how long he had been fighting “for British South Africa”. It was largely at Fitzpatrick’s own expense; as he indicates, he had little money at this stage, having given up his business career. Fitzpatrick finishes the letter with an almost romantic gesture, that he “naturally”, always turns to Milner. The feelings that Fitzpatrick

⁷⁸ Dep. 218. Fol. 62.

⁷⁹ Dep. 218. Fol. 63.

⁸⁰ 44. Fol. 250.

⁸¹ Dep. 218. Fol. 429-432.

⁸² Dep. 194. Fol. 194.

⁸³ Dep. 195. Fol. 99

felt towards Milner were incredibly powerful, dedicating his life and well-being to serving him even though he was himself a man of stature. It was a love and deep admiration that conquered other interests.

The final letter here is one Fitzpatrick wrote to Leo Amery on 14 January 1917 and states his feelings very clearly:⁸⁴

What can I say about the clean sweep of the muddlers and the long delayed but most splendid coming in of 'our man'. Not since I was a very small boy yelping delight over an unexpected holiday have I felt just as I did feel when Lord Milner's name came out as one of the War Cabinet. It was preceded by just the same sensation and experience as marked the 'holiday' ... You see I am still a "Milner Man" heart and soul and every fibre of me; and I get gushing fountains of joy out of old recollections of how he held up the faint-hearted and the wobblers ... Truly it looks as if Milner and the Milner men are going to run the Empire on this basis and that is as it should be for he never looked for any but the best and if there are others (as there are many, of course) who were not of his lot before but are able to do the business, he will have those in too. If you ever have a few minutes idle talk with him, ask him if he remembers the day in old Govt. House, Cape Town, when he sent for me to discuss or criticize his first Government."

This is with reference to Milner's appointment to the War Cabinet in December 1916. It begins by mentioning Milner as 'our man' and his own child-like excitement. Fitzpatrick was at this stage 54 years old and a politician of stature. He then makes the strong statement that he is a "Milner man", "every fibre of me", which suggests the degree to which Milner and what he represented was a central core of Fitzpatrick's identity. His memory of Milner has reached legendary status in Fitzpatrick's mind, as a dominating presence in Fitzpatrick's identity providing sense of purpose and emotional bonds.

FRIENDSHIP, FIGURATION AND ASSOCIATION

Fitzpatrick knew Milner from 1898 to Milner's death in 1925. From the onset, in their relationship Milner created and shaped a follower in Fitzpatrick, as he did with many young men. What made Fitzpatrick different from, for example, the Kindergarden members, was that he was himself part of the elite, in both business and politics. Fitzpatrick's bond to Milner also grew over time and became an all-encompassing part of his identity. Being a part of the Milnerite figuration was both emotionally and intellectually rewarding for Fitzpatrick, providing him with an orientation and purpose. However, the extremity of his feelings of hero worship and positioning himself below Milner damaged Fitzpatrick's interests as a businessman and later blinkered him to the fact that the figuration which Milner stood for no longer existed in the way he believed.

The basis of this figuration was a cluster of close associates, which the following discussions of the Bailey then the Farrar letters will further underline. By being socially, emotionally, and intellectually bound by this group, Fitzpatrick's letters indicate the topics and tone that resonated

⁸⁴ Dep. 372. Fol.1-4

in the figuration and which he used to make sense of his activities. However, the degree to which the beliefs this group held differed from the realities of the political and social context made it inherently unstable, as did the fact it was hinged on one man, who did not have a permanent presence in South Africa. Most English-speakers did not take their beliefs to this extreme, and the Liberal government in the UK did not support imperial claims in South Africa. In addition, the more this group supported each other's ideas, the more their ideas departed from the realities. And also, the wider 'we' of this figuration was in practice not entirely cohesive and contained within it disagreements, jealousies and jockeying for positions as well mutual support, as the following discussion will show.

THE BAILEY LETTERS

The Abe Bailey letters to Milner consist of 20 items and 49 folios (see Appendix 12. The majority (10) are from Bailey to Milner and cover a 27-year period between 1891 and 1918. The letters are fairly evenly spread over this period: one early letter (1891), one during the South African War (1900), three from the post-South African War period (1902), four (excluding one duplicate) during the constitutional crisis (1905-1906), and one during the first World War (1916). It contains just two letters from Milner to Bailey, sent in 1902 and 1918. The only other notable item is a detailed letter from John X. Merriman, an important Cape political figure over many years, sent to Bailey and dated 1918. Abe Bailey has already been discussed in Chapters 3 and 4; and briefly to summarise here, he was a Randlord with large stakes in land and newspapers, on the outer core of the Jules Porgés nexus, and a key member of the Progressive Party. As with the previous section, the discussion following will focus on the relationship Bailey had with Milner and any other indications these letters provide about the wider figuration.

The first letter from Bailey to Milner was sent 6 February 1891:⁸⁵

I have refrained from replying to your very kind letter as I wished to enjoy the taste as long as possible & I can assure you the letter I have received has given the soul much joy since the one you wrote me when you wished me to go to Cape Town & to put a stop to the coalition movement under HMG aegis ... I am sure people often wonder why you have as many devoted followers all keenly anxious to serve you. They little know the many kind incentives you give them – I am going to spread myself a little more in getting people out to the land In O.R.C. and Rhodesia principally & in the latter place we must really work for their end or we shall never get things right in S.A.

At this stage, Bailey's letter takes a similar tone and view as Fitzpatrick, that Milner gave him a sense of purpose and belonging. It also shows that Milner had given him a task, "to put a stop to the coalition movement", which Bailey happily accepted. He mentions that people may "wonder why you have as many devoted followers all keenly anxious to serve you", and clearly he is

⁸⁵ Dep. 37. Fol. 139-140.

including himself in this category, that he himself is “keenly anxious” to serve Milner. In the last part of the letter, Bailey also mentions getting “people out to the land”, that is, supporting the immigration of British citizens to South Africa. Interestingly, Bailey provides an explanation for such loyalty, pinning it to the “incentives” Milner provides, in the letter he had sent. Overall, this letter seems to indicate that Milner had created a sense in Bailey that his opinion was important, and the fact that people wanted Milner’s approval was key to his ability to get them to orient themselves towards him and his policies, to be ‘followers’.

The next letter is dated nine years later on 7 September 1900,⁸⁶ a year into the South African War. Bailey mentions being asked to guarantee £1000 for a Refugee fund and apologises for not giving more, but he had already given a large amount. Bailey ends by writing that he had named his son John Milner, who was now Milner’s god-child. The following letter from Bailey was sent on 7 June 1902,⁸⁷ just a few days after the declaration of peace at the end of the South African War. In this, Bailey states:

I wished you my congratulations on Monday... [and] added what was my ideas as to securing the country in order out large ... settle people on the land which will go a long way to making it a peace ... I know you will pardon me as you know I only have the interests of the Empire at heart ... a good teaching university would be a good thing for South Africa to counter the bad influence of the Stellenbosch College Theology... to turn the teacher imbalance with British ideas & have British instincts.

For Bailey, one of the most important aspects in “securing the country” was the settlement of new British immigrants. This seems to be his primary self-chosen task. A second task was to “counter the bad influence” of Stellenbosch, a college then dominated by theological influences from Holland. Overall, then, Bailey is indicating that his concern is to transform South Africa into a firmly British colony, and it is notable that he has the confidence to propose his own ideas to Milner and to assume that Milner will approve.

A letter to Bailey from Milner was sent not long after this, dated 18 July 1902.⁸⁸ Milner begins by thanking Bailey for his letter of the 7 June and apologising for not responding to telegrams. In response to bringing settlers to South Africa to place on farms, Milner states that the bureaucracy involved made it not worthwhile and suggests that a “man on the spot” like Bailey should lobby privately about this. Milner also notes a telegram from Bailey about Julius Jeppe. Bailey wanted Jeppe to be a member of the Johannesburg Town Council, but Jeppe had been aligned with the Boers during the South African War and Milner felt it was too soon. Jeppe was a close business associate of Bailey and three years later merged his company with Bailey’s Witwatersrand Township Estate and Finance Corporation.

⁸⁶ Dep. 176. Fol. 136-138

⁸⁷ Dep. 176. Fol. 139-140A

⁸⁸ Dep. 176. Fol. 139-140B.

Bailey's concern with encouraging new British settlers marks the next letter too, dated 14 August 1902.⁸⁹ It discusses the importance of attracting settlers and capital to South Africa in the context of Bailey's view that 'the boers' would win an election. In similar terms to Fitzpatrick, Bailey invokes "our cause", indicating that there was a broad understanding, a sense of sharing a joint purpose, and that this purpose was defined around several policies. In addition, also like Fitzpatrick, Bailey expresses a willingness to sacrifice his own interests for this wider cause, indicating the strength of his feelings. Bailey also asks for advice and does so in a subservient way, in writing "what do you think I should do Lord Milner", similar to how a child appeals to an authority figure.

An interesting letter is dated 1 April 1905⁹⁰ and writes:

Since I left you I gathered the information that the responsible govt. movement is almost to be counted as dead as 'Julius Caesar' so you can I think leave much an easy mind as far as they are concerned ... before I close I desire to thank you for all you have done for my country & I feel that you have endured more & achieved more than most people recognise...

Milner at this time had in effect burnt out and his active engagement in dealing with the constitutional crisis was formally non-existent, though through his influence over Fitzpatrick, Bailey and others, his influence remained strong. Bailey finishes by thanking Milner for everything he has done for "his country". Bailey was born in South Africa, as Fitzpatrick was, and implies that Milner's work in in South Africa was not properly recognised. It is notable, however, that Bailey's farewell to Milner is not as intimate as Fitzpatrick's. This, with Bailey's tendency to address his own ideas to Milner, suggests that he was not quite as emotionally and intellectually dedicated to Milner, and that his sense of identity was more focused on himself and a broad concept of Empire rather than Milnerism in a specific sense.

The next letter, sent three months later on 3 July 1905,⁹¹ clarifies some of Bailey's feelings:

I have but a few minutes. I can only say I wish to goodness you were back. It is a hard fight here, much harder thro' your absence. Farrar is a good fellow but his name is not a name to conjure with he displays too much meanness at times and the man in Joburg Street does not appreciate his meanness ... I sometimes feel sick of everything perhaps because you were not here to back me up. If I retire from the game don't be surprised as I am asked to subscribe too much in money and work. The others do little and pay nothing towards funds.

In writing that "you were not here to back me up", Bailey implies that they fought "the hard fight" together and that Milner backed him up, rather than that he was a disciple of Milnerism. The letters between Milner and Bailey have gaps and they did not always reply to each other, they

⁸⁹ Dep. 215. Fol. 15A

⁹⁰ Dep.217.fol.156

⁹¹ Dep. 190. Fol.4-5

were infrequent, and when written were often short, all of which support this interpretation. Bailey clearly greatly admired Milner, but it seems he was of secondary concern to Milner.

In this letter Bailey like Fitzpatrick criticises George Farrar's political commitment and/or skill. It seems that within the Progressive Party, Farrar was not considered the best political leader and they thought it necessary to inform Milner about this. Indeed, Chapter 3 discussed a newspaper article by Bailey two years after this letter (in May 1907), in which he publicly attacked Farrar. There were clearly fissures and disagreements amongst these men, and while in one way these undermined the unity and effectiveness of this figuration, in another such clashes are always part of figurational life and change, as Elias suggests in relation to the development of the naval profession (Elias, 2007). It seems that while the Progressives were always unlikely to win the election or meaningfully alter the constitution, fissures within the party were undermining their cause even further and contributing to the development of new political groupings. Milner had been a key point of support and provided structure and unity to the earlier phase of political life, and without his presence the figuration that had cohered around him and his policies was showing definite signs of weakness.

The next letter is dated 2 April 1906⁹² and mentions the political situation:

The government continues, & the cesspool remains.- Last week I had the archbishop & head master of Rondebosch with Professor Larke & Reid – I agreed to allow them £1000 a year conditionally that Rhodes Trustees did – in order to increase the salaries of the masters – of course I shall give it when it is possible for the trust – if you can do it I hope in fact I know you will – I am hoping to buy Fairbridge library & shall present it to the Cape Town Library on the condition that a day is set apart for the unveiling...

Bailey's wording "cesspool" indicates he had become disenchanted by the political situation and was focusing on issues he could control. One of these was education, which he had a particular interest in. Here Bailey appears to have been using his own money to improve the salaries of teachers and buying a library that became part of the former Cape Town Public Library, now National Library of South Africa. This was part of the Bailey's goal of increasing English-speaking influence through education. Bailey also mentions the Rhodes Trust, and the following letter, sent over ten years later (6 October 1916⁹³), brings Rhodes back into the picture. This mentions a 'note' which Bailey wrote much earlier and was published. This is a newspaper-clipping titled *Mr. Rhodes's Remarkable Forecast*.⁹⁴ In the last part of the article, Bailey states that Rhodes had once told him:

Bailey, everyone should work to bring the Britishers and Americans together; an English-speaking combination means the peaceful development of the world, and, personally, I would not mind if the capital was Washington. Truly, the words of a large-mined man.

⁹² Dep. 474. Fol. 48-49.

⁹³ Dep. 46. Fol. 76.

⁹⁴ Dep. 46. Fol. 83A.

As in the Fitzpatrick letters, the ghost of Rhodes can at points be detected almost fourteen years after his death, and it still played a part in influencing the thinking of Bailey.

The final letter to Bailey from Milner is dated 25 November 1918, just two weeks after the First World War ended. It is in fact a typescript which has no introductory salutation and no signature at the end. However, the contents show it is by Milner, who was at this point was very much involved in the armistice process, and is revelatory of their relationship:⁹⁵

I am ashamed of myself for not answering your kind letter – now nearly a fortnight old – before now, but I have been simply overwhelmed with business since the armistice, too busy even to realise the tremendous victory we have won. Now comes a whole aftermath of troubles, harder work than ever for a whole, without any of the stimulus which the great struggle gave while it lasted. I am afraid I cannot suggest a night to dine with you – even if your kind invitation still holds good – for the present, as I am likely to run over to France again the next few days. It is very kind of you to suggest having a painting done of me, and I must say that if it could be managed, I should greatly appreciate it, for I have not been very fortunate in my portraits hitherto. I am afraid that by no possibility could I give any sittings just at the moment, but perhaps you will allow me to remind you of your kind offer a few weeks hence, when I may be better placed.

Milner begins by apologizing about not responding to Bailey's letter. While Bailey could be called a Milnerite, there were occasions where they delayed replying to each other's letters, and it does not seem that they communicated very regularly. It would seem from this letter that Bailey had made a number of then-recent overtures to Milner regarding meetings, dinners and a portrait. Milner's letter was written in reply to these and reads as a brush off, with such comments as "I cannot suggest a night to dine with you". And while Milner's extreme busyness may well have been due to the armistice, he does not provide any future date on which he would be available to see Bailey, although he does this in a very polite way by suggesting Bailey might "remind" him later.

AND WHAT OF FIGURATION?

Bailey and Milner had an association of over 27 years, and their relationship was in some respects, but not others, similar to the one Milner had with Fitzpatrick. Bailey was guided in his ideology by Milner, and Milner was a source of support and motivation, which led Bailey to invest large amounts of time and capital into policies closely associated with Milner's project. Indeed, Bailey sought Milner's approval, and thought highly enough of him to name his son after him.

But, it appears that Milner had many such loyal followers, and for these men to cooperate and invest time and capital into the imperial project as conceived by Milner, it was necessary for Milner himself to remain at the core and provide a sense of purpose and direction. It also comes

⁹⁵ Dep. 46. Fol. 91.

across that there was a core group to the figuration around Milner, of men like Fitzpatrick who can be seen as followers, and that there was also an outer number of people committed to the project but not so close to Milner himself, such as Bailey. Once Milner left South Africa, Bailey's motivation for politics of this kind declined, as did the figuration in general. Milner often did not make the time to respond to Bailey's letters and invitations, which seems to show that Bailey was somewhat further outside of the figuration than Fitzpatrick, for example. It also appears that Farrar was not highly regarded by Fitzpatrick or Bailey and may well have been an extra step outside of the central grouping in the figuration, something which the following discussion explores.

THE FARRAR LETTERS

THE LETTERS OVERALL

The Farrar letters in the Milner Collection, as with the other sub-sections discussed, contain a mixed set of things. They are composed of 35 letters, telegrams and summaries (see Appendix 13). Of these, 19 are from Farrar to Milner, 2 from Milner to Farrar (one of which was in the Farrar collection as discussed in Chapter 3), and 6 from Farrar's children to Milner. There are also 2 letters from a G.G.R. signatory, discussed later. In comparison to Bailey and Fitzpatrick, these letters were sent over a relatively brief period; the earliest in 1900, and the latest in 1914. The majority (12) are concentrated between 1904 and 1907, with 2 between 1900 and 1902, and 3 between 1912 and 1914. Chapter 3 used the Papers of George Farrar to develop my Eliasian methodology and included a detailed discussion of this collection. Within the Papers, there were four items concerning Farrar's connection to Milner, and from these my analysis concluded that Farrar and Milner had a close social and also political bond which, based on these letters, existed for at least five years. Also, the Lawley dinner document discussed in Chapter 3 indicated that Farrar was a central figure in a wider figuration of Milner followers, and he used the arrival of Lawley in South Africa to bring a group of like-minded men together who jointly expressed their – it is not too strong a word – reverence for Milner. I pick up on various of these points in this present discussion.

MILNERISM AND FIGURATIONAL CONNECTIONS

The first letter chronologically in the Milner Collection is dated 19 December 1900⁹⁶ and is from Farrar to Milner. It concerns a rumour that there had been a political rising (by implication, of the Boer population) in the Cape, which would delay the end of the South African War. Farrar's view of how to deal with this is revealing:

⁹⁶ Dep. 214. Fol. 72-74

Nothing will do other than the harshest measures – burn, hang, shoot and put an end to rebellion by teaching them a lesson they will not easily forget ... ‘Milder Policy’ indeed, I should think we had learnt enough of the Boer character to see the futility of that ... strength he can understand, brutality he can understand, and can feel deep respect for you for the first and almost the second, but magnanimity he will always construe as weakness.

During the South African War of 1899-1902 Farrar was a Major on the staff of the Colonial Division, responsible for intelligence-gathering. Here he expresses very harsh measures to deal with the rumoured uprising. His ‘harshness’ was mentioned by both Fitzpatrick and Bailey, who also described it as ‘meanness’, and for them it was one of the reasons why Farrar was not considered a good politician.

A telegram was sent by Farrar to Milner on 3 June 1902⁹⁷ congratulating him on the end of the War, with no response from Milner to be located. Then the next letter is from Milner himself, dated nearly a year later on 21 April 1903.⁹⁸ In this, Milner explains he would like to make his visit to Boksburg meaningful, that is, by Farrar introducing Milner to prominent men in public life there, so Milner could potentially influence their views about municipal government and the importation of Chinese labour. As noted in Chapter 3, Boksburg and Benoni was Farrar’s pet project, with most inhabitants at the time of British extraction, and in 1907 Farrar would be elected as the representative for Boksburg East. The next letter was sent from Farrar to Milner, dated 18 February 1904.⁹⁹ Within it, Farrar states that

No-one thanks you more than myself for what you have done in alleviating ... our great Labour problem... I do seriously appreciate and recognize how much you have risked in the lending of your great name to the question – no-one will assist more than myself in bringing the importation of foreign labour into a successful mine – thus justifying the position you have taken.

The Chinese labour question is often considered Farrar’s most significant contribution to the course of South African events. He was the author of the first draft of a labour importation ordinance and became the public face of the Chinese labour proposal, including representing such views when a member of the 1904 Transvaal Labour Commission. As is usually the case, Farrar did not achieve whatever influence he had in a vacuum. Certainly, Milner played a significant role in fronting and building support for the importation policy, and in this letter Farrar acknowledges the political risk that Milner took, for which Farrar received much of the credit.

The letter following is from Milner and was sent on 3 March 1904.¹⁰⁰ It is concerned with the effectiveness of the existing railway committee, with Milner complaining that there are not enough experienced men on the committee. Its aim should be to improve business capacity, and Milner wanted more businessmen involved. He asks Farrar to see him that day, possibly to ask

⁹⁷ Dep. 186. Fol. 122.

⁹⁸ Dep. 177. Fol. 172-173

⁹⁹ Dep. 215. Fol. 268.

¹⁰⁰ Dep. 177. Fol. 171A.

him to become involved. The following letter, from Farrar to Milner, is dated 16 December 1904.¹⁰¹ It is by far the longest letter sent by Farrar to Milner, a densely written 34 pages long. It largely focuses on government expenditure, the development of railway lines in Southern Africa, besides one page which provides an indication of Farrar's feelings towards Milner and so is helpful in understanding their relationship and the influence it had on political activities:

What we shall do when you are gone – one fears to realize ?but when you are away – people will then realize how great a work you have done and how much we owe you – To me, coming back, with you gone – is a very different affair – the great pleasure, the great privilege of working with you will be absent – and our ?talk in facing the worries [unreadable] of the future will be enormously increased – and when I read your letter half the interest in coming back has disappeared. I never thought of the time when we would have to part with you and now I see the time in front of us – it makes me very sad and down hearted as no-one knows more than myself what worth the reconstruction of good Government – the foundation of a Transvalia SA has upon you – probably one of the greatest tasks in the history of our people ...

Farrar is very upfront here in expressing how important Milner is to the success of the wider figuration and its interests. There was a commonly held belief among these men that without Milner their effectiveness is limited but that once he is absent then “people will realize”, as proved to be the case. Farrar is also clear in stating that much of his motivation was due to Milner, that it was not only a pleasure but also a privilege to work with him. Indeed, “half the interest” in his political involvements goes when Milner is not there. What comes across is that Farrar, like Fitzpatrick and Bailey, shares the view that Milner and his policies provided him with motivation and an emotional bond, and this seems the cornerstone of Milner's role in maintaining the existence and activity of this figuration.

The next letter is dated 20 January 1907.¹⁰² George Geoffrey Robinson, later Dawson (1893-1963), wrote to Milner from Bedford Farm, Farrar's home.¹⁰³ This is 16 pages long and one of two such letters in the Farrar sub-section of the collection. Robinson/Dawson was a close associate of Milner, having started as his private secretary in 1901. He was one of Milner's Kindergarden, the young men Milner placed in key South African posts, along with Patrick Duncan and Lionel Curtis among others, with them remaining in post when Milner left South Africa. However, at the time this letter was written, Robinson/Dawson was, largely because of Milner's influence, the editor of the Johannesburg *Star* and South African correspondent of the *Times*. Writing when still Robinson, he provides a lengthy comment which throws interesting light on some figurational connections:

We have had a talk here today – Farrar, Crewe, Maydon, Duncan & Curtis, which is to be followed by a dinner at Bailey's tomorrow night. The idea is to form a small private committee in each colony [Cape, Natal, Transvaal, Orange River] to help Curtis in

¹⁰¹ Dep. 217. 34-42A.

¹⁰² Dep. 194. 42-49A.

¹⁰³ Hundreds of letters between Dawson and Milner and Milner's wife Violet (1872-1958) are in the Bodleian Library (MSS. Dawson 1-93), as well as his diaries and papers.

collecting materials & to postpone any public propaganda, the formation of a league etc. till he had done so ... the Cape and Natal people are desperately in earnest; the whole thing is moving very much faster than anyone foresaw; & Curtis is beginning to feel a little nervous about having any resources of his back which he is unable to disclose. Hence this letter. Curtis feels – & so, I think, do Duncan & Hichens – that it will be difficult to keep secret the fact that he is kept going by your £1000, & that, if it should by any chance become known, it might prejudice his case. Personally I don't see quite the same difficulty – no one knows of it but Lord S [Selborne], Curtis, Duncan, Hichens, Feetham & myself & I don't see that anyone need else know – on the other hand he feels very strongly the apparent ingratitude of handing it back after all the trouble you've taken – he suggested to me today that the Rhodes Trust might perhaps be willing to contribute the same amount openly to the cause of fulfilling S. African Union if they were told qualitatively that the thing was fairly stated. I shall be able to tell you more about this by next mail after Bailey's dinner.

Here Robinson/Dawson mentions Farrar, Charles Preston Crewe, John George Maydon, Patrick Duncan and Lionel Curtis. Crewe was a solidier and politician, acting as chief whip of the Progressive Party at that time led by Cecil Rhodes, being a follower of Rhodes in the strong sense. Crewe held the position of Colonial Secretary of the Cape between 1904 and 1907, and also owned a controlling interest in the *Daily Dispatch*. John George Maydon (1857-1919) was a Natal-based businessman and politician, who in 1903 became Colonial Secretary and in 1904 was appointed Natal's Minister of Harbours and Railways. The letter also mentions William Lionel Hichens, who had moved to South Africa to assist Milner in the Transvaal Colony, where he became its Treasurer.

Clearly Robinson/Dawson is here informing Milner of the intention of members of this grouping to establish a committee in each colony (Cape, Natal, Transvaal, Orange River) to assist Lionel Curtis with information-gathering, public propaganda and other political activities. A month earlier, self-government had been granted to the Transvaal, and three months later Louis Botha would become its Prime Minister. This was a crucial time, a time when the goals of this grouping were beginning to slip out of reach and they had become aware of this. The standing of these men, with Bailey and Crewe having considerable ownership of newspapers, and Farrar, Bailey and Maydon having major stakes in business and politics, meant that they were involved in spheres of activity they might expect to influence in ways that would change the course of events. Robinson/Dawson mentions a sum of £1000 which Milner had supplied to support Curtis. Curtis was in the process of writing a memorandum setting out the case for Unification, and the £1000 was his salary as General Secretary of the Round Table which he was helping Milner to establish.

Notably, they all had close links with Milner and this comes across strongly in this extract from Robinson/Dawson's letter, with its information being directly conveyed to Milner himself. In addition, these men were close enough to each other to have a meeting at Farrar's home, followed by Bailey the following night, as well as to be jointly involved in administering what was in part a secret fund supplied to Curtis. They were a group and were operating as such behind the scenes

as well as openly. The goal of this group was that of ‘Milnerism’. That is, the unification of South Africa and the reconciliation of British and Afrikaner South Africans, but in a way that would retain a British Imperial influence over the form that Union would take.

The next letters include one dated 27 May 1907 from Farrar to Milner:¹⁰⁴

Thank you for your kind wishes and all you did over the Bailey account. He has done himself no good and good if he left the Party. I don’t think he should have any following but I am for always expecting these together and I think they are better in hand now than any time.

This continues concerning a strike over wages and that Farrar had reduced working hours and threatened to replace 50% of the workers concerned. However, its greatest interest in terms of present discussion is that Farrar positions Abe Bailey as outside of the central group and indeed as having left the Party that represented its interests, and that “I don’t think he should have any following”. The sense of a centre and peripheries to the figuration and grouping is also conveyed in a comment in the following letter, dated 25 March 1912:¹⁰⁵

Enclosed is a resolution I am advised to send to you. Sir Arthur left yesterday. We were much cheered up at seeing him & only hope next winter you will also pay us a visit. The option given to ... over the Pretoria news, has fairly messed up things. Sir Arthur will see you and explain the position. He has gone into the whole matter.

Farrar had been “advised” to send an enclosed resolution (no longer attached) to Milner, with the implication this was by Arthur Lawley. He comments in ‘we’ terms that link this collectivity with Milner himself, writing that “We were much cheered up at seeing him & only hope ... you will also pay us a visit”. It makes clear that Lawley was seen by “we” to provide a direct link with the “you” of Milner.

The final thing to briefly note about these letters is that they also contain a significant number from the Farrar children Gwendoline, Marjorie, and Helen to Milner. These are invariably undated, and usually focus on statements of endearment and an emotional bond, with “we will miss you”, “sorry to have not seen you” and “please do not forget us” comments abounding. While the contents are less analytically revealing in figural terms, the existence and tone of these letters certainly conveys the sense of a strong bond from at least the Farrar side towards Milner.

ADDING TO THE IDEA OF FIGURATION

While interesting, the letters of George Farrar do not contain any major new insights into the nature of the Milnerite figuration or the Randlords, but rather build on and extend existing insights in useful ways. Notably, they indicate there was a centre to the Milnerite figuration, but with its

¹⁰⁴ Dep. 194. 82-83.

¹⁰⁵ Dep. 198. Fol. 37-38

composition changing according to who is describing it, and also the sense of people on the periphery. It also appears that there was some jostling within the figuration to establish a sort of inner hierarchy, which meant this centre was contested and fluid. The cause of this fluidity had to do with differences between those within the core; Bailey and Fitzpatrick believed Farrar to be too 'mean' to succeed as a politician and to achieve figural, political and social goals, while Farrar placed Bailey outside of the central group and as having left the Party that represented their interests.

The foundation of this figuration was once again highlighted as being heavily dependent on Milner. While there were dozens of men with varying degrees of integration in the figuration and who could theoretically act jointly and purposefully without Milner, it is constantly reiterated – and was indeed confirmed by the eventual failure of the figuration – that Milner was key to providing its members with a sense of common purpose, motivation and coherence. While Milner was in South Africa, these factors created a grouping of men who supported and strengthened each other, and also competed, through nepotism, favours, and social connections, oriented towards Milner as embodying their core goal.

CONCLUSION: ON FIGURATIONS

This chapter has explored a number of sub-sets of letters within the Milner Collection, associated with men widely identified as Randlords. These throw light on the Milner component to the pattern of relationships and activities involved, with other aspects of this also considered in Chapters 3 and 4. In analysing the Milner Collection letters, my Eliasian methodology has been put to work in this present chapter in two mutually-enhancing ways, around what might be described as a figure/ground approach.

Each of the first four sub-sets of letters – Rhodes, Beit, Wernher, Rothschild – was worked through and an item of particular interest analysed in detail, using the context/pre-text/ text/ post-text/succeeding context framework used in previous chapters. From this it was clear that there were strong figural, emotional and personal bonds, allegiances and effects around Milner, while the men concerned were also major figures in other figurations. As a result and in order to respond to this notable feature, a specifically Milnerite figuration, the figure/ground relationship was reversed in the analysis of the three sub-sets of letters that follow in collection order – Fitzpatrick, Bailey, Farrar. In working on these, the letters concerned were analysed specifically with what they indicate about a Milnerite figuration in mind. In the overall conclusion to this thesis in the concluding final chapter, I will return to and discuss the different ways I have used

my Eliasian methodology and consider the strengths and limitations of the different strategies operated. Here, I consider what my analysis of the Milner Collection letters tells of figuration.

As the title of this chapter indicates, the different sets of letters analysed point to the existence of a number of figurations and quasi-figurations; and while these overlap through particular individuals or specific events and circumstances, they are still distinguishable and are associated with finance, the Rothschilds, Randlords and Milner as a symbolic representation of a particular vision of the British imperial project in Southern Africa. However, this latter did not start with Milner and earlier there was a more complicated situation regarding the relationship between Rhodes and Milner.

The Rhodes letters and figuration: Rhodes and Milner were not close friends nor did they often work on joint ventures. They did make statements of closeness, but with these coming across as more aspirational of a close relationship rather than the actual existence of one. Nonetheless there are features of their public positions which gave a special significance to their relationship and which both men were aware of. In addition to his personal wealth and power, Milner needed Rhodes because Rhodes was one of the biggest players in the mining industry, and Milner needed the mining industry's cooperation in order to implement his social and economic goals. Rhodes needed Milner in his capacity as High Commissioner not to intervene or attempt to control Rhodes's activities. At least as importantly, they shared the same values, aspirations and broad vision and were often admired by the same people, and both were leading presences in an important core to the larger British imperial figuration in Southern Africa. Their respective projects were variations of maintaining and extending British imperialism, and many of their underlying goals were alike. And both men had formed influential personal figurations with themselves at the cores. While these sometimes overlapped, and both were components within the wider British imperial figuration, these were separate figurational entities but functioning within a similar social, economic and political space.

The Rhodes letters in the Milner Collection are largely focused on them sharing ideas and intentions regarding the development of the local version of the imperial project, and these ideas were largely assumed rather than consistently stated. They also indicate that both had an accurate appreciation of the others understanding of the imperial project and the role they wished to play in it. Both saw this as them forwarding a concern above themselves; in other words, both tended to frame the logic of their actions as a higher good, and it was this higher good that ultimately connected them. The cornerstone of their relationship was the shared vision of what the imperial future should be and how they would work towards it.

The Rhodes figuration was centralised around the political, financial, imperial and other interests of Rhodes himself and this figuration played an incredibly important part in influencing the course

of Southern African history after Rhodes's death as well as before. As noted earlier, while the Rhodes figuration was based on individual qualities and powers, particularly financial powers, the figurational effects around Milner, initially at least, came in largest part from the political and administrative position he held. It is also clear that this changed over time and that for some people, there was a Milnerite figuration in the stronger sense that Milner came to embody or symbolise a particular vision of the local British Imperial project.

Did this happen because Milner 'inherited the mantle' of Rhodes? That is, did he become the primary symbolic figurehead for a vision of local Imperialism because Rhodes died in 1902 and there would have been vacuum had someone else not symbolised this? Or were there other factors involved that led Milner to this symbolic role which were independent of a 'Rhodes effect'? Obviously this cannot be answered solely by the Rhodes sub-set of letters, a point returned to in the Conclusion. The other letters in the Milner Collection that have been analysed also show much about figurational workings and relationships and how these shifts, change and develop overtime.

The Beit letters and figuration: Beit was perhaps Rhodes's closest business partner. Beit provided Rhodes with the financial dexterity needed for his projects, as well as access to networks which provided the additional capital he needed to succeed, most notably involving the Rothschilds. But Beit was more than this. Their close bond is demonstrable in that Beit supported Rhodes in whatever he set out to do, at times at the expense of Beit himself. Beit was a leader in the mining and financial industries; Rhodes was also a significant player in this, but his fundamental interest was in the expansion of his brand of British imperialism, with Beit playing a large role in this with the means to achieve this.

A figuration formed around Rhodes, as a rallying point of power and persuasion. Beit was part of the Rhodes figuration, not of one cohering around himself. Rhodes, like Milner, was able to draw people into his vision and to orient their activities towards his goals. Beit was a financial genius and a leading member of the mining industry, and he and Rhodes were the most significant duo in the industry. But Beit did not have an overarching vision as Rhodes did, nor the charisma, social skills or ruthlessness in pursuing his goals that was required. It was Rhodes who gave Beit a sense of direction and purpose, with him becoming a key member of the Rhodes figuration and holding that role after Rhodes's death as well. So what were the points of connection with Milner and the Milnerite figuration?

There were few grounds on which Beit was linked to Milner apart from via the link both had with Rhodes, with the exception being large-scale discussions between the Transvaal government and the mining industry, although in a direct sense this was undertaken by lower-level representatives of the mining industry. There was however a *de facto* alliance between them through their overlapping larger-level interests. Milner's imperial plan depended upon the mining industry, and

that British imperial policies in Southern Africa were favourable to the mining industry led Beit to an allegiance with Milner. But at basis what linked Beit and Milner was Rhodes, and this was especially true after Rhodes's death, because Rhodes had selected both of them as key agents who would continue his legacy through the Rhodes Trust. The letters in this sub-section of the Milner Collection support this in indicating a formal and rather distant communication between them in the process of fleshing out how Rhodes's Trust would be used. How this might have developed over time remains unknown, as Beit's health rapidly took a turn for the worse.

Standing back from the detail, a notable feature regarding both the Milnerite and the Rhodes figurations is that core individuals such as Beit were also involved at the high levels of other figurations. While Beit was not a Milnerite, he was both a financial leader and a core member of the Rhodes figuration; and as the other letters in the Milner Collection discussed show, many of those who can be positioned as Milnerites were also present at the highest levels of other figurations too.

The Wernher letters and figuration: It is immediately apparent that the letters of Julius Wernher have a figurational nature to them, in that they indicate as much or more about the connection between Fitzpatrick and Milner as they do that between Wernher and Milner. This is the case to the extent that Wernher appears as a secondary protagonist in this particular collection. However, while Wernher did not play an obvious or prominent role in South Africa politics, the degree to which he was kept updated by a number of Randlords suggests that he was very interested or concerned with ongoing political events, and that these other Randlords believed he took the same position as them. And as their views were heavily influenced by Milner, this implies minimally that Wernher had sympathy for Milnerism and supported it 'from a distance'. His support can be explained because the Progressive party position aligned closest with the interests of the mining industry, which was Wernher's primary sphere of concern. Another explanation is that many of Wernher's closest bonds were with Milnerites or British Imperial sympathisers. Wernher was at the core of the Corner House and the CMIC, whose periphery included Abe Bailey and George Farrar, strong Milnerites. That is, the financial figuration to which Wernher was central had significant overlaps with a particular brand of British imperialism in South Africa, Milnerism, and an associated political party, the Progressives.

These interpersonal connections come across strongly as orienting Wernher's concerns in intermeshing his financial and commercial connections and interests with political activities and policies. As a result, Wernher may well in practice, if not in these specific letters, have played a greater part in unfolding South African events than appears on the surface. An important indication that this is likely, and which *does* appear in these letters, is Wernher's close association with and support for Fitzpatrick, perhaps the most committed of all the Milnerites. Wernher fully supported Fitzpatrick's political life, to the extent that between 1903 and 1907 Fitzpatrick was

barely involved in their business; and then Wernher funded Fitzpatrick's political activities through a trust fund involving him providing considerable sums of money. That is to say, Wernher himself may not have been actively engaged in politics, but he provided Fitzpatrick and others with the capital required to pursue political goals. This was likely for figurational reasons. Fitzpatrick and Wernher had a close long-term bond, Fitzpatrick seems to have started as something of a protégé of Wernher's, and also for business reasons having a close associate in high political places could provide Wernher with indirect political influence and perhaps more importantly with some assurance that the future might well take the kind of shape he wanted as best furthering his interests. This was an important intersection between figurations at their very top levels, something which often appears to be the case. Depending on particular instances, these overlaps can weaken figurations by leading to conflicts around different interests, or strengthen them through the close bonds that exist between leading figures, and such outcomes can differ in different parts of a figuration, and also change over time.

The Fitzpatrick letters and figuration: The Fitzpatrick letters in the collection add to understanding figurational overlaps and changes by providing more detail about Fitzpatrick's relationship with Milner, in particular the type of allegiance he offered Milner and how it changed over time. Fitzpatrick's allegiance was of course his choice, but Milner clearly viewed him as a strong ally who was useful in assisting him in achieving his goals, and he gave him access to parts of his life that others did not achieve. Looking at this from Fitzpatrick's side, it is notable that emotionally and intellectually it dominated Fitzpatrick's identity. Fitzpatrick derived great emotional pleasure from pleasing Milner, and this took the form of him as a follower rather than an associate. In fact, there was an extreme element to Fitzpatrick's feelings towards Milner, verging on religious fervour and hero worship.

The Fitzpatrick sub-set of letters also provide a closer glimpse of other aspects of the workings of the Milnerite figuration. In particular they show at its heart the existence of a conflict between Fitzpatrick and Farrar, and a certain discord both at its core and at its periphery. The Milnerite figuration hinged on one man, someone who did not have a permanent position in South Africa, and most English-speakers did not take their beliefs to the extreme in the way that Fitzpatrick and some others did. The Liberal government in the UK did not support imperial claims in South Africa, and the Progressives would likely have lost power anyway. But the existence of internal conflicts and lack of a permanent leading figure suggests that it would have rapidly declined anyway, even for its core group at the top, once Milner was out of the picture. In this connection, the nostalgia expressed at the Lawley dinner was for a lost past and present, rather than a rallying point.

The Rothschild letters and figuration: Milner and Rothschild rarely mentioned each other in their official correspondences. However, in spite of this it was largely public matters that linked them.

This started with the British Government's need for capital in securing the Suez Canal and also Egypt's itself through financial dependency, involving Milner's position as Director General of Accounts for the Khedive of Egypt and the Rothschild banking empire. Milner's relationship was specifically with Nathaniel Rothschild and lasted over a 22-year period. Their association clearly then grew from a purely working relationship to include a friendly association in social life between Milner and Rothchild and his wife.

It also encompassed them doing each other favours, with this reciprocity maintaining and building figurational relationships by providing advantages to those within the networks – and as the occasion arises, a return of favour is built-in to the accepted pattern of expectations. The Rothschild sub-set of letters show that the pattern of reciprocal favour-giving and requesting can operate down the hierarchy and not just at the higher levels of a figuration. Thus Cuthbert Higgins, whose father was senior but certainly not on the level of either Rothschild or Milner, was provided with opportunities from the most powerful men in society, with Rothschild calling in a favour from Milner to assist him, or perhaps rather his father. Being part of a figuration even at its lower levels could provide access to opportunities out of reach to outsiders.

As this also shows, figurations frequently intersect with other figurations, in this case the almost purely financially-oriented Rothschild family, and its connection with Milnerite circles, including Milner's role in relation to business and government office. The Rothschilds protected their interests by staying close to members of the British elite, primarily men who held high office and through whom they gained information, exerted influence, and who protected their interests and investments. Even before this later period, Rothschild and Milner and their networks were both directly and indirectly brought together by events. The initial was Egyptian finance. On the death of Rhodes, Rothschild and Milner both became Executors of Rhodes's Will. And before that Rothschild had earlier been the backbone of the Wernher-Beit finance figuration as well as a leading presence in Rhodes's Chartered Company, the BSAC, important sources in supporting in their different ways Milner's South African projects.

However, the interdependencies and networks created and which operated across the period from the 1890s to 1914 would not last more than one generation. While the Rothchild family figuration continues to this day, a number of factors led to the end of the Milnerite figuration and Rothschild's connection with it. Perhaps the most important factor is that the association was largely instrumental and focused on specific things, together with the fact that the propellant was largely the connection between the two of them. While their friendship continued and they were brought together by the death of Rhodes, Rothschild's death in March 1915 and the impact of the First World War marked the end of this quasi-figurational association, as many of the other people also connected with it either themselves aged and died or retired or, regarding the younger generations, were victims of the war.

The Bailey letters and figuration: Bailey had a close association with Milner over a long period and was a member of the Milnerite figuration. He invested time and capital into policies closely associated with Milner's project, frequently sought Milner's approval and thought highly enough of him to name his son after him. However, it does not appear that Bailey was 'a follower' in the extreme sense that for example Fitzpatrick was, but was rather a supporter who kept himself towards the outer core of membership of the figuration. The basis of Bailey's rise to importance was through business, and this in turn was largely thanks to his association with the Jules Porgés nexus and later Rhodes and the BSAC. As a South African born, Bailey had been associated with a range of interests and a number of figurations. In particular, he was earlier closely associated with Rhodes, who launched his career, with Bailey then funding *The State*, a Kindergarden paper promoting the idea of closer union, and becoming the Chief Whip of the Progressives. Also, as the previous chapter discussed, Bailey was more widely involved in newspapers as part of his portfolio of business concerns and attempted to use his position in trying to engineer a press campaign to influence public opinion in favour of Union.

Bailey clearly admired Milner but stopped short of being a Milnerite in the way Fitzpatrick or Farrar were. Relatedly, Milner often did not make the time to respond to Bailey's letters and invitations, which suggests that Bailey was further from the core and on the periphery of the figuration than others whose letters I have discussed. Relatedly, Bailey criticised Farrar in a letter to Milner, and a few years later publicly attacked Farrar in a newspaper article. But Farrar, it should be remembered, was also criticised by Fitzpatrick, certainly a member of the core group of Milnerites. Clearly Farrar was causing a rift within the Progressive Party, but that Bailey was expressing this rift in public was literally to break ranks. Expressing such disagreements in a public way in a newspaper shows that by 1907 the Progressives had truly fissured, and that Bailey played a significant part in making this public knowledge. Bailey seems to have gained his motivation to support the Imperial project largely from Milner, and once Milner left South Africa Bailey's support declined, along with the figuration in general.

The Farrar letters and figuration: Adding to the picture gained from exploring letters in the Farrar Papers discussed in Chapter 3, the Farrar sub-set of letters in the Milner Collection confirm that Farrar had a close relationship with Milner and this was an ideological as well as a personal bond between them. Ideologically, Farrar was an unabashed Milner admirer and shaped his political thinking almost entirely around the ideas and policies propounded by Milner. Socially, the letters from Farrar's children and wife in this collection as well as in the Farrar Papers show the entire family expressing a social bond with Milner. This is also reflected in how Milner treated Farrar. Compared with Milner's other 'admirers', Farrar seemed to have acted as a sounding board and confidante. It is interesting and somewhat revealing that Milner rarely if ever expressed his views explicitly in his letters and nor does he look for feedback, although clearly he viewed Farrar as

someone whose opinion carried some weight. However, as the letters discussed in this chapter show, others within the inner Milner circle did not have the same view of Farrar. Bailey and Fitzpatrick both described him as too harsh, and thus unsuitable for political leadership. From Farrar's perspective Bailey was outside this core figuration, while the views that Bailey and Fitzpatrick had of each other seemed to indicate a certain rivalry. It seems that Farrar was unusually close to Milner in terms of sociality, while being not particularly well integrated into the Milnerite figuration, creating what seems to have been an uneasy tension.

Figurations and intersections: As this discussion has shown, there were a number of figurations and these are distinguishable from one another. However, at particular times and in particular circumstances, key figures from different figurations came together or held positions in multiple figurations or led to associations becoming much more figural, as quasi-figurations. This discussion has also showed that figurations each have particular structures. This is particularly noticeable regarding the Milnerite figuration, which changed and evolved over time. Certain people tended to dominate specific figurations depending on the nature of the figuration itself. Financial figurations, whose concern was the accumulation of capital and growth, often had multiple leaders and a periphery, such as the Wernher and Beit nexus. Other figurations were dominated by specific characters, such as Rhodes as the core of his own figuration in the 1890s; and because of similarities of beliefs and goals, The Milnerite figuration was composed of many the same people until he left South Africa, but with some continuation of this role for some people thereafter.

There were differences in the figural effects that occurred around Rhodes as compared to Milner, but certainly both promoted a 'local' version of the British Imperial project. Both Milner's and Rhodes's vision of the British imperial project in South Africa rested on the idea that there was a 'British' figuration already in existence there, that it could act as such, that imperial policy as Milner and Rhodes formulated it could hinge on it, and that membership of this figuration could be expanded through immigration and become more powerful than the Boer (and increasingly nationalist) figuration. Milner and the figural connections which cohered around him, and which to an extent had been inherited from Rhodes as its fount, thought that this community was more imperial, more united and more numerous than it actually was. Indeed, this was assumed not only by Milner and other 'local' figural connections, for at least some members of the British government imagined that this figuration existed. They were all wrong. The failure to establish South Africa as a British dominion, Milner's resignation from his post in 1905 because of his sense of failure, and the loss of the South African elections in 1907, are all demonstrations of this, alongside the failure to reckon with the increasing sense of unity among the Boer/Afrikaner populations.

The complex and over time changing networks and the ensuing patterns of interests, allegiances and conflicts that have been analysed in this chapter have enabled me to further develop figuration as a methodological tool in useful ways. In the Conclusion following, I will comment more directly on my Eliasian methodology and also consider what it has enabled me to add to figuration at a conceptual as well as a methodological level.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION: FIGURATION, THE RANDLORDS AND CHANGE

Chapter 1 introduced my research – concerned with the men known as the ‘Randlords’ in the context of discoveries of diamonds and gold in South Africa and their role in the processes of economic development and change that unfolded around this – and set the scene theoretically. In getting to grips with social change in a way that transcends a supposed macro/micro division, this chapter emphasised the importance of working with a form of sociology that is concerned with social process, sociogenesis and figurations: namely, Norbert Elias’s process sociology. It pointed out that the idea of a figuration is not coterminous with a network or elite or association, as figurations are more concerned with processual and longitudinal, over time, aspects of groups and social change. In addition, the chapter argued that the study of figurations needs to use ‘reality-congruent’ concepts and to build ‘true types’ rather than ideal types, for true types are focused sociological accounts that are concerned with the complications and messiness of everyday life as well as its patterned regularities.

These conceptual linchpins have a number of implications for my research. The Randlords should not be viewed as isolated individuals but as operating in complex chains of interdependence, and also as mutually dependent on others in their decision-making and actions. As a result, to understand the roles that the Randlords played, the focus should not be on either individual Randlords or the Randlords as a ‘set’, but on the relational dynamics between the individuals and the figurations. It is these structured dynamics and actions that formed the conditions for their rise or fall and therefore are key to getting a purchase on processes of stasis and change. Encapsulating these are other Eliasian concepts of the established and outsiders and changing ratios of power, important in understanding the dynamics of competing figurations, the links that existed, and also divisions within any particular figuration.

With regards to the influence of the work of Elias on my research, Chapter 1 also argues for ‘fair play’ for his theory. The choice and use of theory should be based on how well it is suited to solving particular analytical problems; and in Elias’s case, his theoretical thinking should be evaluated by what it is that his long-term intellectual project was trying to do. The rest of the thesis is concerned with putting his ideas to work in the South African context and more specifically regarding the Randlords and related figurations and quasi-figurations. However, while his work is increasingly renowned in social theory terms, for Elias it is always a matter of how ideas work in practice, and so the question remains of how to best put his ideas to work in a methodological sense and a reality-congruent way. Responding to the first part of this on

methodology forms the basis of Chapter 2, and responding to the second part on reality-congruent substantive work is the basis of Chapters 3, 4 and 5.

Prior to starting this research, I had not had any significant experience of archival research. Progress was however made by working it out as I went along, working through the secondary literature, the primary literature, as well as exploring the archives in question. Through this iterative process, I arrived at a methodology consonant with Elias's emphasis on sociogenesis and figuration. This is discussed in close detail in this chapter, as it underpins the analysis in the following chapters. A central aspect is that the methodology is concerned with investigating and using documents of life, and letters and their processual character in particular. The level of detail given is necessary as there is no existing sufficient account of an Eliasian methodology, while for my purposes what is set out in Chapter 2 is both appropriate and sufficient in conveying the why, how and what of my searching for appropriate means to put his methodological thinking to work into my research practice. Built into the approach developed in this chapter are ideas about how to home in on the figural aspects of letter-writing and letter exchanges, as a key concern of the methodology is to tell in more detail than previous research has done about the figural aspects of Randlordism using the remaining traces of their activities to do so.

Elias's approach indicates the importance of focusing on concrete phenomena and developing reality-congruent ways of investigating, interpreting and understanding them. In this, letters and letter-exchanges as everyday documents of life are helpful as source material, because they show how things unfold over time and person-to-person. The sequence, chronology and dialogical aspects of letter-writing are therefore important as well as their specific content, and exploring letter-writing and exchanges in depth provides a means of moving beyond existing secondary sources, which tend to use material in collections by focusing on just one or two items and selecting these in support of already-existing positions and so focusing on a very limited range of things. Chapter 3 shows how these ideas were initially put into practice regarding the letters and other papers of one of the Randlords, George Farrar. Farrar's papers were selected as my first detailed foray into the archive collections for pragmatic reasons, due to their relatively small size, and because as a 'lesser' Randlord, little has been written about him.

The Eliasian methodology developed from actively engaging with the Farrar Papers and struggling to understand this collection and its contents. It proved to work well, and the sampling strategies employed enabled me to gain a good working grasp of the entire collection, so that I could review important features in more detail, and then from this focus in on specific documents that were of particular importance. The context/pre-text/text/ post-text/succeeding context approach to analysing specific letters gave me an in-depth understanding of what was going on that I could not have gained from just overviewing them in a more superficial way.

This analysis of the Farrar Papers in Chapter 3 provided a number of interesting insights into Farrar specifically as well as Randlords as a grouping. In terms of Farrar, a major factor in his rise to prominence was a combination of skill and luck, but was also importantly a result of the groups of people he associated with. These groups, and particularly the finance connections of the Ecksteins, provided Farrar with the financial backing and expertise he needed. However, while Farrar was a part of this key association, he did not become a central figure, remaining on the outside for the duration of his career. However, there were indications that Farrar did become a central figure within another figuration, which was politically concerned and oriented towards Alfred Milner, though the material in the Farrar collection provided glimpses of this only late in the 'life' of this Milnerite figuration.

Thinking about the Randlords, the Farrar collection materials indicate that there were overlapping associations or figurations of people. Individuals would often be part of a number of figurations with varying degrees of commitment and centrality. In addition, there were significant differences between Randlords regarding where their larger goals and aspirations lay, and as such they were not a homogenous group. Indeed, both the finance association and the Milnerite figuration which Farrar was connected with had a *de facto* hierarchical structure, with some people more central than others, and different positions within this being played by different people. Further, viewing this in terms of figurations more broadly, it is clear that figurations can have a core and more peripheral figures, indicating that the internal structural dynamics may vary, and this variance in structure and membership occurs over time. It also shows that figurations can rise, decline and end, with this being an important reason why my attention was caught by the glimpses provided of the Milnerite figuration in its later stages.

Chapter 4 explored the papers of the Central Mining and Investment Corporation (CMIC), with the particular concern being what these could further tell me about Randlords and figurations. The papers of this company were selected as it was a (fairly late) product of the most important association on the Rand, included some of the most important Randlords and with them having connections with many more. Figurations were explored across different elements of the CMIC collection with regard to events, both large but especially small ones, with the routine and quotidian aspects of people dealing with each other forming much of the discussion of the sampled and selected CMIC letters. Overall, the men most closely associated with the CMIC can best be described as being at basis an association with shared interests, and becoming a quasi-figuration in taking on figural aspects in particular circumstances. But more generally the research regarding the CMIC showed that there was a close association around finance and business but not regarding matters of affect and political purpose, suggesting that some associations do not quite become figural apart from in specific circumstances, and that the role of affect in changing the character of an association is an important although not the only factor in this.

However, many of the most important Randlords – Wernher, Beit, the Ecksteins, Bailey and Phillips – either gained their initial footing in the diamond industry or greatly benefited from their association with Jules Porgés. This connection, although not a figuration in the stricter sense, did have the characteristics of an association with quasi-figurational aspects. Notable among these aspects was an interdependency between the men concerned, which grew over time; but important differences also existed regarding business strategy and political orientations. While the resulting cross-currents helped inhibit a more developed figuration from arising, the absence of strong bonds of affect of a political or interpersonal kind was also an important factor. The association carefully controlled who was an insider and provided them with opportunities, and actively cut out competition from opportunities, resources and information. Within the association there were however fault-lines, most notably between those with and without external political involvements, and who did and did not aim to influence external non-business circumstances and events. A further fissure opened up over time as the economic, business and political context in which they operated changed, removing the ‘rogue entrepreneurs’ in a figurational connection in favour of company managers and administrators who were not strongly linked other than through a decentralised management structure.

Reflecting on the concept of figuration, this chapter indicated that it was smaller day-to-day events and activities that kept the Randlord figuration together by developing associations and also by encouraging allegiances where a sense of group solidarity had not previously existed. It also showed that fault-lines can and did arise within the figuration, and members has areas of difference. And while such things can weaken a figuration, depending on circumstances they can also strengthen it. But it seems to have been the over time development of a kind of ‘closing of the frontier’ with regards to entrepreneurship and the accompanying rise of corporate management that made the greatest inroad on the Randlord figuration. This component of my research has also shown that differences exist between figurations, which can be traced successively over time, and quasi-figurations, which form from associational links in particular circumstances. Overall, because there is great variance between figurations, it is hazardous to generalise about figurations and how they work, for it depends on the people, the purpose, and the wider circumstances in which their interconnections play out over time.

So far, I have indicated that figurations have longevity over time and are characterised by closer bonds beyond those of interest defined narrowly; they have core groups and peripheries, people can change position within the figuration; figurations coexist with other figurations and also with looser associations, and also key figures in one figuration are likely to be found as key figures in others that are linked. Insofar as further generalisation is possible from the work discussed in Chapter 4, it is that a figuration will change over time as different people join and leave and

circumstances change, and that under even ordinary circumstances many figurations will rise and fall and can decline and come to an end.

The final chapter, Chapter 5, returns to the Milnerite figuration. It discusses how this connects with other figurations and also associations with some figurational characteristics, such as those forming around Rhodes, Wernher and Beit and the Rothschilds. This was explored by focusing on letters from the Randlords in the Milner Papers, and deploying my Eliasian methodology in two ways, around the figure/ground metaphor. Letters from the first four sub-sections of Randlord letters in the Milner collection – by Cecil Rhodes, Alfred Beit, Julius Wernher and Nathaniel Rothschild – were considered using sampling and the context/pre-text/text/ post-text/succeeding context approach to detailed analysis of specific letters, as already utilised in Chapters 3 and 4. Then, having established the strong Milnerite figurational connections that existed, the remaining analysis dealt with the Percy Fitzpatrick, Abe Bailey and George Farrar letters by focusing in on these connections and the different ways in which a strong bond with Milner was written about in the composing letters and connected papers.

This analysis indicated that a number of figurations and quasi-figurations existed, and while at points these overlapped, they were still distinguishable, including the presence of a distinct Randlord figuration. Milner became an important figure within several figurations, and as a result often acted as a sort of bridge between finance interests and a particular brand of imperial politics. Milner did, in other words, inherit the mantle from Rhodes in some specific respects, in providing a focal point and acting as a symbolic figurehead for a local imperial project closely associated with his policies. On the other hand, Milner's power came largely from an official position backed by his clear sense of political purpose and his facility in interpersonal relationships, while for Rhodes it was more a matter of immense financial and political power invested in him specifically, coupled with his even clearer sense of political purpose. My work on these letters in the Milner collection has also shown that although Beit was in some circumstances in the background, in particular contexts he was very much in the foreground, and also neither Rhodes nor Milner could have done what they did without his financial acumen any more than they could have done without that of Rothschild.

Great emphasis has been placed on the structuring effects of figurations on Randlords, and thus far the argument has been that the Randlords played little role in directing the course of events. It was rather the discovery of diamonds and gold, and the social, political and economic forces this unleashed, that largely shaped the course of history. Indeed, it was shown that the Randlords were very much bound by the figurations into which they were interwoven, and attempts at influencing social change often failed. In addition, the direction of change envisaged by such attempts were near invariably in line with the political climate of romanticised nationalism; what the Randlords often did with their wealth and power supported existing trends (Imperialism, white dominance,

capital accumulation etc.), trends that would likely have occurred without them, rather than steering a new course.

The Randlords, and more broadly those within South African society who were most able to influence the course of history were not those with the most wealth, nor the most power, though these were of course important, it was those who were the most charismatic. Those most able to influence the course of events – particularly here Cecil Rhodes and Alfred Milner, although others like Rothschild and Porgés came close – were able to orientate the ideas and activities of others in a purposeful way towards goals that mattered to these notable individuals. Their defining feature was an abundance of charisma or charismatic authority. These individuals can be said to have influenced the course of events to a greater degree than others as they spearheaded major initiatives of social change by means of the figurations they formed or which formed around them. Major figures in a British and imperial context, various of these men were even more significant players in a South African context, although with interesting limitations on their ability to effectively promote their interests, as I have discussed.

Reflecting on the methodological approach taken, an important question to ask is how my findings might have differed if I had not selected collections and documents in the way that I did. If I had adopted a more direct and ‘follow the first twitch of the nose’ approach, for instance, I could have skipped the papers of the CMIC and headed from Farrar straight to the Milner collection. However, one aim of this research was to develop a more transparent and methodical approach to archival research and its methodological basis. Doing so meant that I could avoid a ‘confirmation bias’, that is, including only those collections that immediately indicated what I was looking for with regards to Randlords. My approach has provided me with a far wider view, and also a deeper one, for it has provided me with important indications of what the other interconnected associations and figurations look like, thereby raising complexities of the external and also internal organisation of these and their changes over time. Thereby I have gained a clearer picture of what a figuration is.

The original goal of my research was to explore whether and in what ways the Randlord figuration produced change in South Africa. From the interconnected set of analyses I have presented across the composing chapters of this thesis, it can be concluded that they did do so in the specific sense that they dominated the diamonds and then the gold industries, and some aspects of this continues to have effects even today. With regard to other, wider aspects of change, the picture is much more mixed. Abe Bailey tried to produce change with regard to the Rhodesian referendum, but his efforts were foiled by those lower down the hierarchy influencing other members, but also by external events, so that he would not have had the effect he wanted anyway. At close quarters, George Farrar’s influence on events and particularly Chinese labour comes across much more as the product of his association with Milner, with Milner working behind the scenes directing events

and outcomes. And at the close quarters provided by the wide variety of letters I have discussed in detail and related to the contexts of their production and effects, matters were clearly complex, uneven and were impacted by different circumstances. The influence of the Randlords on changes regarding the big events have been taken for granted in the secondary literature, but the methodological approach I have taken in looking at small events suggests something rather different, which is that it is the long *durée* of change set in motion by diamonds and gold that had and continues to have a changing impact, rather than deliberate attempts to produce or control change. The smaller events certainly often had consequences in the short run, and some of them played out over longer periods of time. However, it is the wider circumstances which seem to have played the most significant role in influencing what had effect and what did not.

Looking again at the concept of figuration, the figurations analyzed are clearly hard to pin down and describe in precise detail, but this is for good reasons. People can occupy elite positions in more than one figuration, indeed for the groups I have been looking at this was the norm. This further means that there are overlaps and intersections between different figurations, which relationships may be closer or more distant and also change over time. What binds these figurations together often differs; an individual may be a part of a figuration because of financial interests, and also another person because of political concerns, but as has been shown, bonds of affect can be as important or more important than those of financial or political interests. In addition, figurations are constantly changing over time as people join or leave the associational links, or if there are major changes in external circumstances.

The shape of figurations can also change because having variable cores and peripheries, with some people remaining important, while others change roles or leave completely, as was the case with Fitzpatrick in relation to Wernher. However, it was also clear that those who are relative outsiders were not necessarily unimportant, because reciprocity in the doing and giving of favours provides the basis of continuing links and bonds not only at the top of the figuration, but also between its top and those lower down. Bailey is an example of this in relation to the Milner figuration, as he positioned himself outside of the main part of the figuration but still played an important role in relation to it.

I want to end with commenting explicitly on what my reality-congruent exploration of ‘real types’ of the Randlord and figuration adds up to and what this tells me about the processes of change in South Africa.

In their *South Africa, Past, Present and Future*, Lester, Nel and Binns (2000) have tried to explain the present condition of South Africa by considering the country’s previous ‘structural’ transformations, arguing there were three major transformations, and each was shaped in turn by the mould set by the previous one. I shall bounce off their arguments to present what my research

leads me to conclude about social change in South Africa and the role of the Randlords and related figurations and quasi-figurations in this.

For Lester, Nel and Binns, the key periods of transformation are: the transition to liberal capitalism and the abolition of slavery (roughly the 17th to the 19th centuries), the transition to industrial capitalism and segregation (19th to 20th centuries), and late capitalism and the abolition of apartheid (20th to the 21st centuries). Their analysis has five further arguments. The first is that these three transitions are the result of changes not only within southern African societies, but within a broader capitalist networks of power, by groups located both in the global peripheries like South Africa and in successive metropolises such as Britain and USA. The second is that, structurally, for them very little changed over time in South Africa, and the legacies of colonialism and apartheid have continued to constrain change. Third, in each case of major transformation in modern South Africa's history, they argue that local elites have utilized their connections with capitalized elites elsewhere, and particularly in the global metropolises, to re-establish their hegemony. Fourth, they propose that there are powerful economic and cultural mechanisms which enable privilege to be contained and perpetuated inter-generationally. And finally, they argue that attempts to connect the past, present and future should be made through investigating and analysing the underlying processes by which social groups are formed, and how they compete and cooperate.

The idea that major transformations are the substance of social change and that these occur *en bloc* is the basis of the arguments made. Thinking at a very broad level, this would appear to be true, but on closer inspection it soon breaks down. In South Africa, the rapid social changes that occurred were uneven and, as discussed in Chapter 1, developed in an enclave way and left most of the economy still largely an unchanged pastoralism. In addition, the idea that changes occur as the result of large-scale events or processes is only one part of a far more intricate picture. My research has shown how social change, whether it be the importation of labour, the content of newspapers, the results of elections, land and minerals rights deals, providing favours to members of configurations, occurred as the result of long-term much smaller-scale processes that had an underlying important level of complexity to them. In other words, social change in South Africa was composed of major events – but also of many, many smaller events and processes, and it occurred over the long *durée* and in a not entirely cohesive way.

Each major period of transformation is seen by Lester, Nel and Binns in terms of local elites utilizing their connections with capitalized elites elsewhere to agentially re-establish their hegemony and control. My research, which specifically focuses on the top level of South African elites and their interconnections over the late 19th and early 20th centuries, has shown no indication of this level of control or agency. Rhodes did use Rothschild capital, Wernher, Beit did use Porgés's capital, as well as other international relationships existing between the Randlords

figuration and a finance association or quasi-figuration, but this was an interdependency between the parties concerned rather than of elite conglomeration in South Africa somehow using international finance to 're-establish their hegemony'. My research has indicated instead that the South African Randlords and other elite figures did not control international finance, were often constrained and controlled by it, and in many instances the relationship was one of the Randlords working for international finance rather than the other way round. More generally, it has also demonstrated that the Randlords did not individually create their social positions, nor did they have much influence on the structures enabling and restraining them.

Diamonds and gold created the conditions on which a certain social configuration came to exist; the Randlord and the other figurations that my research has explored did not decide this. In other words, Lester, Nel and Binns assume a degree of agency and control among members of the figurations that my research indicates did not exist. Examples covered in the thesis are the attempts by Randlords to influence the course of events usually failing, such as Bailey's attempt to influence a referendum, Fitzpatrick's drive to win the 1907 election, and the broader failure of Milnerite imperialism in South Africa. In addition, changes in business practice in the 1920s removed the social positions which Randlords had held as 'rogue entrepreneurs' with serial as well as consecutive involvements and took on a far more corporate structure.

This change importantly undermined their position, with this bringing into question the claim that there are mechanisms which enable privilege to be perpetuated from generation to generation and that the dominant groups manage these. At the level of generalisations about race, class and gender, which Lester, Nel and Binns's unit of analysis operates at, this is true. White South African men have continuously dominated wealth and privilege in South Africa, and none of these periods of transformation undermined this, including the end of apartheid. Yet, the finer-grained analysis in this thesis shows that the figurations and quasi-figurations in South Africa were certainly not able to manage or control these periodic shifts. This was partly because they simply did not have the power required, partly because fissures, conflicts, and varying conflicting interests as well as agreement and some common causes existing amongst their members. It is also partly because most of the Randlords and the men in other figurations and quasi-figurations discussed were not born into, nor did they have or create, lineages of wealth and social position. Most did not have children and more specifically sons, given the prevailing gender order of the day and the way it mapped onto economic and business structures, to whom their wealth and organisational positions could be passed on intact.

The legacies of both colonialism and apartheid continue to unfold and to constrain change in South Africa, represented in particular by extreme inequality and the racial character this still tends to exhibit. But, while on one level this is obviously true, my research has shown that it is important to look in detail at the unfolding of the past into the present-day, to see what the

structural factors are and also to recognise the important differences, for the idea that things have stayed the same is simply not so. Much has changed, while some things have stayed the same, and this interplay of points of change and points of stasis is best seen at ‘local’ and everyday detailed levels. However, while Lester, Nel and Binns write that it is important to attempt to connect the past, present and future through examining the underlying processes involving social groups, in fact they do not actually do this. Instead they pronounce about it at a general level and on a long time-scale, so that it is always possible to find exceptions and factors that run counter. In order to understand sociogenesis – which, after all, is key to understanding the unfolding character of social life and social change – the details of everyday life have to be explored in depth to see these processes at work.

This is what this thesis has done. Investigating sociogenesis through the lens of letters, and letters written by members of key South African figurations, quasi-figurations and associations, offers a window onto the more quotidian character of past events as engaged in by members of these groupings. Recognising that letters are a representational medium, and so are always written from a point of view which is at the same time shaped by whoever the addressee is, it certainly is important. But all sources of information about the past are representational in character, and none exist in a one-to-one relationship with ‘the past’ itself. That said, the serial, chronological and unfolding character of letters provide important insights concerning how their writers represent their particular point of view on the matter in hand and how this is shaped given the particular addressee they are writing to, while the contents can shine illuminating light on the activities and decision-making that goes on beneath a public surface. As I have shown, this opens up for enquiry aspects of the workings of the figurations, quasi-figurations and associations I have been researching in an innovative way. My reality-congruent exploration of ‘real types’ of the Randlord and related figurations in this thesis enables these to be seen in much more three-dimensional terms and as both powerful and at the same time constrained by factors within-figuration as well as more widely.

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APPENDIX 1: THE LETTERS OF GEORGE FARRAR

Num.	Date	Sender	Receiver	Content
1.	29 September 1904	Howard Maree (Chamber of Mines)	George Farrar	Resignation C.O.M.
2.	3 October 1904	Donald Currie (Chamber of Mines)	George Farrar	Resignation C.O.M.
3.	26 January 1906	Percy Farrar	George Farrar	Business in S.A.
4.	14 June 1913	George Farrar	Ella Farrar	Strikes and family
5.	21 July 1913	George Farrar	Ella Farrar	Strikes and family
6.	28 July 1913	George Farrar	Ella Farrar	Strikes and family
7.	8 August 1913	George Farrar	Ella Farrar	Strikes and family
8.	31 May 1918	Percy Farrar	Ella Farrar	Family business
9.	12 January 1896	F.J. Coster	Gaoler	Prisoner separation
10.	22 January 1900	Lord Kitchener	George Farrar	Special military rights
11.	3 November 1902	R. Goldmann	George Farrar	Congratulations
12.	12 December 1901	War Office	George Farrar	D.S.O.
13.	17 February 1902	War Office	George Farrar	D.S.O
14.	6 November 1902	George Farrar	Milner	D.S.O.
15.	January 1903	Geoffrey Robinson	George Farrar	Knighthood
16.	31 July 1903	Brothers and Mother	George Farrar	Pride in mention of Farrar in parliament
	8 July 1905	Hubert Hamilton	George Farrar	India politics
17.	29 December 1905	Hubert Hamilton	George Farrar	India politics, Chinese labour, Kitchener, Milner,
18.	16 November 1905	Richard Solomon	George Farrar	Education in the Transvaal
19.	22 February 1907	D. Elliott	George Farrar	Recent Election/ Transvaal Progressive Association
20.	12 August 1907	George Farrar	Robinson	Premier Diamond
21.	15 August 1907	Lord Selbourne	George Farrar	Premier Diamond Issue
22.	15 August 1907	George Farrar	Lord Selbourne	Premier Diamond Issue
23.	15 August 1907	Lord Selbourne	George Farrar	Premier Diamond Issue
24.	19 August 1907	Henry Adler	George Farrar	Premier Diamond Issue
25.	21 August 1907	George Farrar	Henry Adler	Premier Diamond Issue

26.	20 August 1907	William M. Carter	George Farrar	Premier Diamond Issue
27.	22 August 1907	George Farrar	William M. Carter	Premier Diamond Issue
28.	24 August 1907	William Fuller Lance	George Farrar	Premier Diamond Issue
29.	24 August 1908	Bertie Bennion	Ella Farrar	Incident in Parliament
30.	24 August 1908	Mrs. Harcourt	George Farrar	Progressive Party success
31.	7 October 1910	George Farrar	-	Farrar's refusal of baronetcy
32.	31 December 1910	L. Harcourt	George Farrar	Baronetcy
33.	6 January 1911	H.L. Stanley	George Farrar	Baronetcy
34.	-	George Farrar	-	Premier Diamond Issue
35.	5 April 1910	Leander Star Jameson	George Farrar	Political cohesion
36.	20 September 1914	George Farrar	Ella Farrar	Politics, build up to war, and family life
37.	3 January 1915	George Farrar	Ella Farrar	Activities in S.W.A.
	21 October 1914	Ella Farrar	Helen Farrar	-
38.	17 November 1914	Ella Farrar	Helen Farrar	-
39.	15 February 1915	Ella Farrar	Helen Farrar	-
40.	25 November 1914	Bertie Bennion	Ella Farrar	S.W.A. activities, letter from Kitchener
41.	24 April 1915	J.C. Smuts	George Farrar	Meeting request
42.	13 November 1915	J.J. Sullivan	B. Bennion	Tribute to Farrar
43.	20 November 1915	Percy Fitzpatrick and Sir Edgar Walton	Ella Farrar	Tribute
44.	28 February 1916	C.G. Johnstone	Captain Farrar	Tribute
45.	14 March 1911	B. Bennion	George Farrar	Rumours on East Rand
46.	-	-	George Farrar	Attempt to destroy Kleinfontein mine
47.	10 January 1915	George Farrar	Captain Cocks	Pumping activities S.W.A.
48.	22 April 1915	M.J. de Jager	George Farrar	George promotion to Colonel
49.	27 April 1915	Clark? (provincial secretary)	George Farrar	Abolition of Hospital board
50.	23 January 1903	Joseph Chamberlain	George Farrar	Italian Labour
51.	23 March 1912	George Farrar	Muriel Farrar	Greetings
52.	21 February 1907		George Farrar	

53.	21 February 1907	R.W. Schumacher	George Farrar	Congratulations re parliament
54.	21 February 1907	George Farrar	R.W. Schumacher	Thanks re congratulations
55.	7 December 1911	F.T. Nicholson	George Farrar	Thanks re time at Bedford Farm
56.	7 January 1912	-	George Farrar	Thanks re time at Bedford Farm
57.	15 December 1911	Lord Milner	George Farrar	Sadness re Farrar's retirement politics
58.	16 April 1912	Secretary (Unionist party)	George Farrar	Regret re Farrar's resignation from the committee
59.	25 July 1907	Currie	George Farrar	Regret re resignation form chamber of mines
60.	29 February 1912	G. Lawdy	George Farrar	Old association
61.	6 April 1912	George Farrar	Helen Farrar	Value of opera and music
62.	21 April 1912	Lord Milner	George Farrar	Thanks re resolution to support Milner; expression of commitment to S.A.
63.	18 July 1907	George Farrar	Chairman Benoni Committee	View on legislation
64.	-	Bishop Carter	George Farrar	Excitement of British people in Rhodesia Re new country
65.	11 November 1907	George Farrar	H Chambers	Acknowledgment of appreciative letter
66.	28 June 1907	-	George Farrar	Strike threats on Farrar
67.	16 July 1913	On behalf of George Farrar	P.J. Snyman	Thanks re previous letter
68.	14 July 1913	P.J. Snyman	George Farrar	Warning re threat on his life
69.	13 December 1913	-	George Farrar	Warning re threat on his and L Phillips' lives
70.	4 May 1908	George Farrar	Solomon Joel	Disappointment re refused financial assistance for the Progressive Campaign
71.	19 October 1914	George Farrar	-	Cleanliness of the Cold storage room
72.	1909	George Farrar	-	Article about the Progressive party
73.	February 1914	-	George Farrar	Women he met in first trip to S.A.
74.	25 December 1914	Doctor Russell	George Farrar	Upset re cancelled appointment
75.	29 December 1914	George Farrar	Q.M.G. (Pretoria)	Request assistance of E.R.P.M staff
76.	16 February 1939	Flyfisher's club	Mrs. Basil Turner	Delivery of rod and reel of George Farrar
77.	10 April 1951	Thos S. Koeldzanigen	Helen Turner	Re a photo of Farrar and his experiences with him
78.	8 July 1954	Deryck Humphriss	Helen Turner	Re writing a positive picture of Farrar
79.	30 January 1959	A.M. Dawey (Pretoria chief Archivist)	Viscountess Lowther	Re donation of Farrar Papers
80.	30 March 1959	B. Bennion	A.M. Dawey	Finding Farrar's papers
81.	30 March 1959	B. Bennion	Mrs. Turner	Re letter from Transvaal archives
82.	8 May 1959	B. Bennion	Mrs. Turner	Re Meeting senior archivist together

83.	12 May 1959	B. Bennion	Mrs. Turner	Re Meeting senior archivist together
84.	29 May 1959	B. Bennion	Mrs. Turner	Writing Farrar's story
1737				
85.	4 January 1913	George Farrar	Muriel Farrar	Domestic discussion (horse racing, activities visitors (Gladstone)
86.	11 January 1913	George Farrar	Muriel Farrar	Domestic issues
87.	27 January 1913	George Farrar	Muriel Farrar	Domestic issues
88.	8 February 1913	George Farrar	Muriel Farrar	Domestic issues
89.	3 March 1913	George Farrar	Muriel Farrar	Domestic issues
90.	10 March 1913	George Farrar	Helen Farrar	Domestic issues
91.	17 March 1913	George Farrar	Muriel Farrar	Domestic Issues
92.	22 March 1913	George Farrar	Muriel Farrar	Domestic Issues/ European politics
93.	19 April 1913	George Farrar	Muriel Farrar	Domestic issues
94.	4 April 1913	George Farrar	Muriel Farrar	Domestic Issues
95.	15 May 1913	George Farrar	Muriel Farrar	Domestic Issues
96.	5 June 1902	Joseph Chamberlain	George Farrar	Terms of Surrender
97.	22 February 1907	Lord Milner	George Farrar	Politics
98.	1905	Arthur Lawley	George Farrar	Education question

APPENDIX 2: SIR ARTHUR LAWLEY DINNER DOCUMENT

Sir Arthur Lawley.

Visit to Johannesburg

.... Meeting old residents

In private, informal manner, a little band of citizens, chiefly from the Rand, but with Pretoria also represented, gathered at the Carlton Hotel on 20th. March, 1912. To do honour to Captain the Hon. Sir Arthur Lawley, G.C.L.K., K.C.M.G., formerly Lieutenant-Governor of the Transvaal, lately Governor of Madras, the object being to accord to him a hearty welcome on the occasion of his revisiting the Transvaal. About sixty sat down. Many of the guests has been associated with Sir Arthur Lawley during his official work in this province.

After dinner, the Royal toast was honoured, following which Sir George (host), who presided, gave the health of the guest of the evening. Sir George explained that they had all been called together at short notice, owing to Sir Arthur Lawley's visit being but a brief one. They had met that evening in order to bid a true welcome to a man whom they honoured: a man whom they would always regard with the sincerest affection (applause). Sir Arthur was one whom history, when quietly and dispassionately written, would reveal as worthy of the deepest gratitude. (Applause). Their guest had given ten of the best years of his life to South Africa – almost five years as Administrator in Matabeleland, with then a break as Governor in Western Australia, after which, luckily for this country, he came back as Lieut. Governor of the Transvaal for five years. (Applause). It was almost unique for a Governor, coming back to greet old friends, to be able to see in such practical manner the results of the years' service he had given to this country. (Applause). They were glad indeed to have Sir Arthur Lawley here in those troubled days, when only time could heal the sores caused by a devastating war. Under Lord Milner – (applause) – Sir Arthur Lawley had done great things for the Transvaal. (Applause). Perhaps to-day those two might not receive the gratitude and reward to which they were entitled: but, ultimately, when perhaps politicians disappeared (laughter), when the historian wrote the record of the building-up of Civil Administration here, due gratitude and due recognition would be accorded these two men had laboured so effectively for the good of South Africa. (Applause). Sir Arthur Lawley had just been North, had seen the dreams of Cecil Rhodes being realised, had seen progress and prosperity in Matabeleland. Here in the Transvaal he had seen advancement not only on the mines but on the land, the soil, the true/wealth progress. (Applause).

Sir Arthur had just completed a term of office of vast responsibility in India. When in the Transvaal he governed a comparatively few people: in Madras he governed forty-two million people. That very fact brought vividly to their minds the greatness of the British Empire. (Applause). In time their country, South Africa, would be prepared to take its big responsibilities. Sir Arthur Lawley was a bright example of the patriotic Englishman who through courtesy and ability had been truly representative of His Majesty in any and all parts of the Empire. (Applause). Than their Guest they could imagine no truer type of the high-minded, courteous, and able Englishmen. (Applause). Concluding, Sir George said: Sir Arthur, we bid you

welcome. Just as you had not forgotten us, so had we not forgotten you. (Applause). We thank you sincerely for coming back amongst us all again. (Applause.) We wish you every happiness, we wish you all good luck; and with our wishes to you we would like to couple the name of your wife, Lady Lawley. (Applause). We feel sure your career will continue to be successful, because we have proof, the best proof, of your fitness (sic) to fulfil arduous duties and to carry great responsibility: and the same qualities and the same characteristics, we safely predict, will surely be forthcoming whenever and wherever claimed by His Majesty. (Loud Applause.)

Sir Arthur Lawley, who on rising to respond met with an ovation, said:-

Gentlemen, - Customs change, you know. And South Africa is not exempt from the universal rule. I hope I shall not be deemed guilty of any grave impropriety if, in the very few remarks I propose to make to you this evening, I refrain from attempting any feat of bi-lingual oratory and confine myself to the English tongue. (laughter.)

Gentlemen, I feel under a very great obligation to my friend Sir George Farrar. (Loud applause.) In the first place I am the recipient of a courtesy which has been experienced by all the guests under his roof, and in particular to-night I am the recipient – with you – of his splendid hospitality. (Applause.) I thank Sir George Farrar especially for the opportunity he has given me of being here to-night and thus to find myself face to face once more with those whom, as in days gone by, I venture to look upon as my friends. (Applause.) and finally I feel quite unable to express my gratitude to Sir George Farrar for the way in which he presented to you his views about me; and, equally, to express to you my gratitude for the cordial reception which his words met with at your hands. I can honestly say I only wish I felt worthy the encomiums that he has been so good as to bestow on my poor efforts to serve my King and my country.

It is over six years now since I left South Africa, and over six years since I was in England, and it would not have been very surprising if, as soon as I found myself free to take a holiday, I had sped to the Old country, but you know, as well as I know, the fascination of this wonderful South Africa. (Applause.) Her siren voice called to me, and I felt bound to come again to this country, in which I have always felt, and shall always feel, the most absorbing fascination. (Applause.) Sir George Farrar spoke just now of the fact that I had been governing in Madras a population over 43 million of people, and yet you know that is only a small proportion of the great Indian Empire: and perhaps until one really comes to appreciate the full significance of the magnitude of the Empire one is apt to forget how important a part India plays in the great Imperial scheme. (Applause.) I am afraid I myself in days gone by was not exempt from that failing. Much has been written, much spoken, of the welcome which is accorded as a rule by the Transvaal to those who come from India to visit these shores. (laughter.) It is not, alas always quite so cordial or so conciliatory as it might be. (Mr. Hosken: Hear, hear.) Mr. Hosken will appreciate the sense of difference which I experience in wondering as to what manner of reception I might have, seeing I came direct from India's shores. (Loud laughter.) But, gentlemen, the reception which was accorded to me by my friends in Rhodesia, and the welcome I have received on all hands since I came back to the Transvaal, have touched me deeply. I am sincerely sensible of your great kindness towards me. (Applause.) I wish to thank you most heartily for the way you have received me tonight, and for the way you have received the very kind allusion made by the host to my wife Lady Lawley. (applause.) When I look round this table tonight, and see this

circle of friendly and familiar faces, I am carried back to the work of other days. Many of those here, and many more, strove as I did, and, with me, under Lord Milner's banner, strove and struggled for what we believed to be the salvation of South Africa. (Applause.) Indeed, gentlemen, I do not forget the help you have us in those days. I am not unmindful of the part which many of you played in the task upon which we were set of building up a contented and a prosperous and a British South Africa. And of those who rendered us yeoman service in those days there was no one who did more either for me personally, or for the Government of the day than my friend, Sir George Farrar. (Loud Applause.) To myself, as I say, and to the Government of that day, he tendered his unfailing help and support; he gave us his time, the benefits of his sagacity and of his knowledge of the country; he gave us loyal and unswerving support – and I, at all times, shall never forget it. (loud applause.) Memory, as we know, plays tricks with us, and I think many a man here to-night will be surprised if he will set to work and count the number of Years Sir George Farrar has devoted to the service of South Africa. For the moment, as he reminded us, other calls upon his time have necessitated his withdrawal from the political arena. I hope it may be only his temporary withdrawal. (applause.) I deplore it myself, as I am certain each one of you does: and, in particular, if I may say so, I deplore the cause of it. This is not the occasion for me to speak of these matters, except in the most general way possible; but I cannot withhold my tribute of admiration for the straight-forwardness, the pluck, and the courage with which Sir George Farrar faced those difficulties; and I should like to take this opportunity of expressing the hope that these difficulties may by the same characteristics be speedily overcome, and that he will steer the East Rand ship through the rough waters of to-day into the smooth sea of complete prosperity. (Applause.) Sir George Farrar said just now that he was sure I must have been struck by the remarkable changes which have taken place both in Rhodesia and in this province since last I was there and since last I was here. Indeed, gentlemen, they are to me remarkable. When I take up the map and see what your railway policy has achieved; when I find myself speeding over most beautiful roads where in the old days I struggled and bumped, and wondered whether I should ever get to my journey's end; when I look round and see what has been done for the farming industry, and what progress it has made; when I realise, as I am glad to do, that the policy initiated by our gallant Chief, Lord Milner – (applause) – has not been abandoned; and visiting, as I did the other day, the experimental farm at Potchefstroom, seeing how much had been done on the lines laid down; when I hear from men, who ought to know, how much advance there has been in agriculture; and when, finally, I see the great confidence in and around Johannesburg in all directions, I am utterly amazed. To-day, thanks to Sir George Farrar's kindness, I motored through Benoni and Boksburg and Germiston and very nearly the whole of Johannesburg. On every side I saw practically new cities; and here in this town the building operations which have been and are going on, point unmistakably to development and tokens of wealth. These tokens I hope signify that you are all becoming royally and rapidly rich. (Laughter.) Other changes have taken place – even vaster than those indicated: I mean changes in the political sphere. I feel, honestly, great difference in speaking about that subject this evening, because you will understand me when I say it is exceedingly difficult when one's hands are full of other business, and when one is thousands of miles away to appreciate exactly what is going on; and in the second place I feel everyone of you here knows much more about the political situation in South Africa than I can possibly claim to. Therefore, I propose to say but little on this subject. Criticism, you know, is always very easy, and when one is wandering down the path of criticism one is sometimes led into the field

of bitterness, from which, anyhow, I believe I gladly refrain. Changes that have taken place have caused me not only considerable surprise, but I must confess at times considerable consternation also. The pattern of government which has been woven was not exactly what anyone of us, I take it, would have divined it to be; but, after all, it is better – is it not? – to deal with a question of this kind on broad lines and to consider what was the position in South Africa shall we say some twenty years ago in order to compare it with the position of the country to-day. South Africa, gentlemen, has now entered into the higher life and a wider organism; and she has become an integral part of that great scheme of Empire to which allusion has already been made. There must be times of course when parochial tendencies for a time at all events seem in vogue, and when free progress is hindered by such things as crass prejudice. But let us look at the great fact that the unification of South Africa is an actual achievement (hear, hear). The days, thank god, are gone by when one important and intelligent section of the community are at the mercy and the caprice of a sixteenth oligarchy, and I dare to hope that the sons of South Africa, by whom I mean not one section or another, but to all whom has been committed the control of the destinies of South Africa, I dare to hope that they will rise to a full measure of their responsibility – (applause) – and that they will so meet their patriotic obligations that this country shall take its place, and take it worthily, in the hierarchy of nations which go to make up the greatest Empire upon earth. (Applause.)

Gentlemen, these are the hopes which, coming back to this country, I dare to entertain, and I know that you will heartily re-echo the wish that they may be fully achieved. (Applause.) I can only assure once more, Sir George Farrar, of my high appreciation of your courtesy and your kindness to me, and to assure you, gentlemen, of my pleasure at being back amongst you. Let me thank you, if I may, for the token of good-will towards myself which you have made manifest this evening, and I would ask you to believe I reciprocate that good-will most cordially. (loud applause.)

Mr. George Goch proposed the health of Lord Milner, the great chief under whom Sir Arthur Lawley laboured. – this toast met with a very hearty reception, and it was resolved to send to Lord Milner the following message: –

“That all present desire to tender to Lord Milner their cordial greetings, and to assure him of their continued regard and of their grateful memory of the services he has rendered to South Africa”.

Other toasts followed, including that of “Sir George Farrar,” who replied. – the National Anthem concluded a homely little gathering, memorable for the obvious pleasure it gave all present to meet personally once more an old, tried, and trusted friend in Sir Arthur Lawley.

APPENDIX 3: ARTHUR LAWLEY'S DINNER LIST

Dinner to Sir Arthur Lawley,

At the Carlton, Johannesburg,

20th. March, 1912.

<u>Present.</u>	Pitt, Campbell.
Baker, Herbert.	Pistorius, H.F.E.
Bettington, Col.	Pierson J.W.
Barclay, C.H.	Parrott, Colonel.
Bourke, E.F.	Pim, Howard.
Bagot, Major, the Hon., D.S.O.	Pennant, Douglas.
Brown, J. Frank, C.M.G.	Roy, John.
Bennion, B.	Rogers, Dr.
Carr, Sir William St. John.	Rogers, H.A.
Chappell, E.	Ramberg, baron.
Chudleigh, C.	Skinner, Ross.
Currie, Richard.	Soutter, H.W.
Dawe, W.H.	Sandilands, Gordon.
Dalrymple, Col.	Schumacher, R.W.
Davies, Dr. W.T. F., D.S.O.	Seaton, Arendeacon
Davies-Karri, Major	Strong, A.J.
Douglas, Major.	Thompson, James.
Evans, Emrys, C.M.G.	Taberer, H.M.
Evans, Samuel.	Villiers, Charles.
Feetham, R.	Wentzel, C.A.
Farrar, Sir George, Bart., D.S.O.	Webber, H.O'K.
Forrest, John.	Webb, Clen.
Franks, Sir Kendal, C.B.	
Goch, George.	
Heady, W. Beachy [unreadable]	
Higgins, G.W.	
Henley, Major.	
Hosken, William.	
Hofmeyr, H.	
Lace, Dale.	
Lawley, Sir Arthur, G.C.L.E., K.C.M.G.	
Mithcell, George	
Marx, Charles	
Mullins, Major, <u>V.C.</u>	
Niven, Mackie,	
Nash, Rev. J.O.	
Napier,	

APPENDIX 4: ARTHUR LAWLEY'S DINNER GUESTS

1. **Bagot, Major, the Hon., D.S.O.** - fought in the South African war and worked for Farrar in the ERPM; was appointed by Farrar to manage the CMLIA in 1904, which was in charge of recruiting labour in China
2. **Baker, Herbert.** - British architect for the Randlords
3. **Barclay, C.H.**
4. **Bennion, B.** - Farrar's private secretary; fought during the first world war
5. **Bettington, Col.** - Imperial light Horse (South African War); Fought in the 1906 Zulu Rebellion with a composite Mounted Rifles Regiment from the Transvaal
6. **Bourke, E.F.** – Pretoria's first elected mayor.
7. **Brown, J. Frank, C.M.G.** – Postmaster-General of the Transvaal under British Administration
8. **Carr, Sir William St. John.** - First Mayor of Johannesburg, and a prominent figure in the gold mining industry.
9. **Chappell, E.**
10. **Chudleigh, C.**
11. **Currie, Richard.**- Businessman who operated in Johannesburg focusing on property, conducting auctions across from the Rand Club
12. **Dalrymple, Col.** - mining magnate who served on many boards with Farrar
13. **Davies, Dr. W.T. F., D.S.O.**- Imperial Light Horse Regiment. Served as both a combatant and a medical officer and won the distinguished Service Order during the Siege of Ladysmith. In 1906-7 as Lieutenant Colonel, he commanded the regiment.
14. **Davies-Karri, Major** – businessman who sold Australian timber on the South African market, and was involved in the Jameson Raid and fought during the Boer war with the Imperial light horse.
15. **Dawe, W.H.** – President of the Transvaal Chamber of mines and the South African Light Horse
16. **Douglas, Major- General Sir William, K.C.M.G, C.B., D.S.O.** – served in the Bechuanaland expedition (1884-1885); became lieutenant. Fought in the South African War (1900-1902); became Major General in 1912.
17. **Evans, Emrys, C.M.G.** – British vice Consul at Johannesburg from 1897 – 1899; financial Adviser at Bloemfontein; financial Advisor to Lord Roberts, 1900: Controller of the Treasury, Transvaal, 1900. Lord Milner nominated him a member of the Johannesburg Town Council in 1902; Director (and vice chairman) of the National Bank of South Africa the Johannesburg Consolidated Investment Co., Henderson's Consolidated Corporation, the Vereeniging Estates, Sheba G.M., and other companies.

18. **Evans, Samuel.** – mine owner of the Crown Gold Mine and was a partner of the Ecksteins.
19. **Farrar, Sir George, Bart., D.S.O.**
20. **Feetham, R.** – Worked under Lionel Curtis, who was an old friend; acted as high Commissioner of South Africa from 1907-1910, and again from 1912-1923. He served on the Transvaal Legislative Council (1907-1910).
21. **Forrest, John.** – Australian; Politician; colonial secretary in Australia; minister of defence (1901-03), home affairs (1903-1904) and treasurer in five ministries; as Minister of defence (1902-1903) managed Australia's involvement in the last stages of the South African War. (imperial minded and an Australian Nationalist.
22. **Franks, Sir Kendal, C.B.** - Surgeon who acted on the board of directors of various organisations
23. **Goch, George.** – Born in South Africa. Was mayor of Johannesburg 1904-1905; involved in the black flag rebellion (Kimberley); Had a jewellery business; part of the Kimberley rush; Cape Legislative Member; owner of the Wemmer and George Gold Mining Companies; director of the Banjes Gold Mining Co., and was the first Chairman of the Witwatersrand Gold Min Co. (Knights); served on the Chamber of Mines; involved in the Jameson Raid; member of the nominated Legislative Council. Served as a chairman of the Labour Importation Association; During 1904 involved in many important public and social functions, such as the reception to Lord Milner, the reception to Lord and Lady Roberts, the farewell to Lord Milner, and the welcome of Lord Selborne; During 1905, organised the arrangements to establish the Johannesburg suburb of Newclare, which he owned.
24. **Heady, W. Beachy**
25. **Henley, Major.**
26. **Higgins, G.W.**
27. **Hofmeyr, H.**
28. **Hosken, William** – Managing director of several gold mining companies; involved in the Jameson Raid; elected to the Johannesburg Council by Milner in 1902
29. **Lace, Dale.** – British: Gold and diamond mining magnate and Randlord
30. **Lawley, Sir Arthur, G.C.L.E., K.C.M.G.**
31. **Marx, Charles** – Served on the board of directors with Farrar on the Witpoortje Syndicate
32. **Mitchell, George** – Prime minister of Southern Rhodesia; general manager of the Rhodesia Exploration and Development Company.
33. **Mullins, Major, V.C.** – Captain in the Imperial Light Horse during the South African War.
34. **Nash, Rev. J.O.** – Bishop-Coadjutor of Cape Town.

35. **Niven, Mackie** - Chairman, Unionist Party Club, Johannesburg; Headed the Transvaal labour commission, appointed by Lawley and Milner
36. **Parrott, Colonel.** – Special service officer during the South African War.
37. **Pennant, Douglas.** – British; Captain; Served in the South African War
38. **Pierson J.W.**
39. **Pim, Howard. British** – worked as an accountant for the BSAC; served on the first Johannesburg Town Council
40. **Pistorius, H.F.E.**
41. **Von Ramberg, Baron Egon** – Consul of Austria-Hungary at Johannesburg for the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies.
42. **Rogers, Dr.**
43. **Rogers, H.A.**
44. **Roy, John.** – Started a railway contracting firm; worked in finance and then in coal mining.
45. **Sandilands, Gordon.**
46. **Schumacher, R.W.** – Witwatersrand Rifles
47. **Seaton, Arendeacon**
48. **Skinner, Ross.** – delegated by the Transvaal Chamber of Mine to proceed to the East in order to investigate and report upon the labour supply there for the S.A. mines.
49. **Soutter, H.W.**
50. **Strong, A.J.**
51. **Taberer, H.M.**
52. **Thompson, James.**
53. **Villiers, Charles.**
54. **Webb, Glen.**
55. **Webber, H.O’K.** – Mining Magnate, close associate and speech writer for Farrar.
56. **Wentzel, C.A.**

APPENDIX 5: MILNER TO FARRAR

21.4.12

Telegrams

Sturry Court

Sturry.

Sturry.

Kent.

My dear Farrar

Many thanks for your letter of March 25th containing a resolution passed by those present at the dinner for Sir Arthur Lawley.

I can assure you that it gave me very great and special pleasure to receive it. I should like to thank all there, who joined in the resolution, and particularly my old friend, Mr. George Goch who moved it. Perhaps you would kindly convey my thanks and greetings to him.

I have been told that I am regarded in some quarters as having lost interest in South Africa. Nothing could be further from the truth. I think you know the reason why I cannot, under present circumstances, be much in public about that country. And my interest in it does and always must continue undiminished, and otherwise my affection for the members of "the old guard" who stood by the union jack in the time of trial. To be kindly and appreciably remembered by them will always be to me the greatest honour and pleasure.

Believe me,

Your sincerely

Milner

I will talk to Lawley about the 'Pretoria news'. I do not think the Glen Reno episode is of much importance.

APPENDIX 6: PHILLIPS TO CREGOE

Copy.¹⁰⁶

1, London Wall Buildings,

London, E.C.

25th July, 1907

J.P. Cregoe, Esq.,

“Trendinick,”

Mayow Road,

Sydenham, S.E.

Sir,

With reference to your call, and in reply to your letter of the 23rd inst., Mr Lionel Phillips directs me to say that he has again read the documents, which in his opinion show that you have no claim, moral or legal, upon the property or upon the firm.

In view of the tone you saw fit to adopt in your letter of December 20th last to Sir Julius Wernher, and the action you have since taken, Mr. Phillips does not consider that any useful purpose would be served by continuing the correspondence.

Yours faithfully,

^Signed^

¹⁰⁶ This document is a copy of an original. This line was added by the CMIC to indicate this.

APPENDIX 7: CREGOE TO PHILLIPS

Copy¹⁰⁷

“Tredinick”,

Mayow Road,

Sydenham, S.E.

30th July, 1907.

Dear Sir,

Re Lark Syndicate

I beg to thank you for your letter of the 29th instant and note that your conscientious opinion of my position is one directly opposed to the three judgements of the present Transvaal High Court, and is also opposed to the position taken up by your counsel, when the first and principal of these judgements was given.

It is undoubtedly thoughtful of you in suggesting “that there is a proper and recognised form of “procedure for testing alleged rights” although you do not define your meaning. I may however inform you that I have applied to every Court both here and in the Transvaal which can be interested in such matters and any actions or doing which I may have entered into or may enter into, are, and will be justified by reason of the replies given to me.

The last paragraph of your letter leads one to believe that you have a grievance against me; this is a strange position for you to take up, after all which has occurred during the last 13 years, and I would further say that I am prepared to vindicate my position and to justify every action when the opportunity offers.

You will know that I have on several occasions attempted to meet your firm in order to come to an honourable compromise and you will also know in what manner my attempts have been met. This continuous effort to ‘freeze me out’ has caused me to adopt a certain course of procedure, which I may however mention has not been done in a vindictive spirit, as has been freely stated, but has been done as a means towards obtaining rights which have been declared to be mine and another’s. From your personal knowledge of the matter from the commencement I was somehow of the opinion, on your arrival in England, that you might have taken a more practical step in the matter than have given me what you presumably intend to be ‘advice’.

Yours truly,

(Sgd) J.P. Cregoe.

L. Phillips, Esq.,

1, London Wall Buildings,

E.C.

¹⁰⁷ This document is a copy of an original. This line was added by the CMIC to indicate this.

APPENDIX 8: MEMORANDUM REGARDING THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

P.O. Box 1014

Head Office - Johannesburg

Johannesburg

Branches and offices, capetown, Pretoria,

Salisbury, Bulawayo, London.

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Confidential

9th June 1921

The Political Situation in Southern Rhodesia

Memorandum

1. There is a consensus of opinion in Southern Rhodesia that the administrative functions of the British South Africa company should cease at the earliest practicable date. It is sufficient to state, without entering into the history of the charter, the circumstances of its renewal in 1914, and the effect of the Privy Council judgement and the Cave Commission award, that the recent Milner dispatches concede this position and promise the grant of responsible Government subject to the settlement of certain questions of detail.
2. A Committee was, in March 1921, appointed by the secretary of state for the colonies, under the chairmanship of Lord Buxton, to consider certain questions relating to the future government of Rhodesia. The terms of reference, as regards Southern Rhodesia, were as follows:
 - A. When and with what limitations (if any) Responsible government should be granted to Southern Rhodesia.
 - B. What procedure should be adopted with a view to working out the future constitution.
 - C. Pending the coming into effect of Responsible Government what measure will be required to enable the British South Africa Company to carry on the administration.
3. The report of the Buxton committee dated 12th April 1921, was published in South Africa on the 11th May 1921 and a copy attached. The Report gives a useful historical account of Southern Rhodesia so far as the present position is concerned and makes certain recommendations which are of great importance. It is the general belief that the main recommendations will be adopted. The Report, it should be noted, confines itself strictly to the terms of reference and does not deal

with any possible form of Government alternative to Responsible Government. Lord Milner in his dispatch of December 1920 definitely stated that, if the electors re-endorsed their decision in favour of responsible government, it would be granted. The committee, therefore, declare in their Report that: –

We are not concerned with the question of principle; nor whether the grant of Responsible Government to Southern Rhodesia is advisable or not; nor whether there is any other feasible alternative such as the continuation of the Company's administration, the introduction of a system of Representative Government or the incorporation of Southern Rhodesia into the Union of South Africa.

4. The recommendations of the Buxton Committee are summarised under Paragraph 99 of the attached report.
5. The responsible government party is the only active party in Rhodesia with a definite, coherent political programme, but there is in evidence an appreciable, and, apparently, increasing sentiment which favours absorption by the Union in preference to undertaking Responsible Government. Most Rhodesians believe, and admit, that the destiny of the Territory is bound up with the political future of South Africa; but the majority – even of those who hold this view – insist, with the greatest emphasis, that the establishment of Responsible Government must be a condition precedent to any overtures or negotiations having for their object closer political relationship with the Union.
6. The attached memoranda (which were written before the issue of the Buxton Committee Report) are from men who, by reason of their experience and capacity and the positions they occupy, are signally qualified to express an opinion upon the economic and political features of the situation. The divergence of view which, in some essential particulars, they display is characteristic of Rhodesian politics and exemplifies the difficulty that is always experienced when an attempt is made to estimate the temper and opinion of the general public there.
7. It is, I think, a fair assertion that the Responsible Government party in Rhodesia has hitherto been so absorbed by the purely local aspects of the political problem; has so concentrated its energies upon getting rid, at the earliest possible date, of the existing administrative system, and has had its activities so centred in a few leaders possessing strong personal feelings and ambitions, that there has been little attention or thought to spare for considering the Imperial significance of Rhodesia especially in relation to the Union of South Africa. Now that the prolonged campaign of aggressive and, sometimes, embittered agitation against the Chartered Company has succeeded, it is not unlikely that necessary delay before, at the earliest, Responsible Government can be instituted will witness an appreciable growth of pro-union sentiment more particularly when, with their imminence, the practical financial and economic aspects of Responsible Government become the real, and not the abstract and far-distant problem which they have hitherto appeared to be.
8. Responsible Government, as a permanent institution, would seem to be fore-doomed to failure and there is much reason to think that, from the standpoint of Rhodesia itself, it had better not be attempted while there is a possibility of satisfactory bargain with the Union. But, in deciding how

any influence which a newspaper organization possesses should be exerted, there are a number of special considerations which it is important to keep in mind, among them being these: -

The popular sentiment in Rhodesia, so far as it can be gauged, is, at present, overwhelmingly in favour of Responsible Government whatever may be the view as to the ultimate relationship with the Union.

No attempt to stampede Rhodesia unto Union could possibly succeed and no newspaper campaign alone would be effective.

Any movement towards Union on the part of Rhodesia must come from within and the overtures must come from Rhodesia. Any campaign conducted in the Union would only prejudice what chance of early success there may otherwise be.

The views and advice of the present administration as to the future form of government have no influence worth mentioning on the public at large and, if emphasised, would do more harm than good to the policy advocated.

It is important to appreciate the unpopularity of the Administration and the distrust with which its opinions in matters of policy are regarded. That the popular estimate is unjust and, in some respects, incomprehensible to the outsider is unquestionable, but this does not alter the fact that has been stated.

The best opinion among those in the Union who desire the incorporation of Rhodesia is – it can be confidently asserted – that the initiative must be taken by Rhodesia, that the movement must come from within and that any inspired campaign in the Union or in Rhodesia itself would be undesirable and unsuccessful.

9. The wise and correct attitude for our Rhodesian newspapers to adopt is to accept the position that Responsible Government appears now to be inevitable and thereupon to take any natural opportunity that may present itself to refer to the advisability of considering the merits of incorporation. Our newspapers in Rhodesia have been so often wrong politically – from the popular standpoint – that alike on grounds of principle and expediency it would be a mistake at the present stage, to indulge in any systematic pro-Union campaign.
10. The Buxton Committee points out, it may be noted, that “the recommendations which we make would in no way preclude or prejudice the incorporation of Southern Rhodesia into the Union by Mutual agreement if, in the deliberate opinion of the electorate of Southern Rhodesia, this appeared at any time to be a desirable course”. All the present indications are, however, that the Referendum, if the terms of constitution are agreed upon – which is likely – will be greatly in favour of setting up Responsible Government.

[signed] John Martin

....

General manager

The political situation in Southern Rhodesia.

Memoranda by

Mr. R.H. Douglas Editor, The Rhodesia Herald.
 Mr.A. Harrington Editor, The Bulawayo Chronicle.
 Mr. H.S. Hodges Manager, Argus P. & P. Co. Ltd., Bulawayo
 Mr. R.H. Douglas.

The following general survey of the political conditions is in the form of replies to certain specific questions which were put:

1. The present administrative position and the general effect of the Milner dispatches and the Cave Commission award.

At the moment the administrative position is fairly sound, largely on account of the unexpected buoyancy of the Customs revenue and the receipts from income tax. Most merchants are very much overstocked with good and, though imports still continue on a surprising scale, a big falling off in the receipts from this source is inevitable for the greater part of the current financial year (from April 1), and there is a prospect of a big decrease in income tax receipts. There is not much to say about the Milner dispatch except that, in my opinion, the Elected Members committed a capital blunder in not accepting the Milner offer of immediate loan facilities and a virtual guarantee of Responsible Government, if the country wanted it in 1923. Under this scheme the country would have obtained the breathing time it urgently requires without the risk of absolute stagnation in the meantime. That offer has been rejected without any protest from the General Public, and so far as I can see it is not likely to be revived. In this connection, the effect of the Cave Award is to saddle the country with a debt, which cannot be less than a million and a quarter and may reach two and a quarter millions. Practically the whole of this would be a dead-weight debt – it would be only to a very limited extent reproductive.

2. The general attitude of the B.S.A. Company in reference to the future Government of Rhodesia

Whatever the attitude of individual directors may be – a point on which I cannot speak – it must obviously be to the interests of the Company to secure a general settlement at the earliest possible opportunity. So long as they retain the Administration, the directors cannot obtain a settlement of the award in respect of accumulated deficits, nor compensation for delay in making payment, especially as the Commission, through some extraordinary freak, disallowed interest. A payment in cash or negotiable securities would, in these time, be worth a great deal, where the amount involved is from £3,000,000 to £4,000,000 net. The alternative – that the company should retain control of the unalienated land as agent form the Crown and recoup itself from sales – is surely unthinkable; it would certainly lead to constant friction with any future government. On the other hand, the Company, as owner of 85 per cent of the shareholdings in the past Railways, the guarantor of Railway debenture issues and the proprietors of large and valuable commercial assets, has a vital interest in the establishment and maintenance of efficient Government in Rhodesia. Under Responsible government, the politicians and the labour leaders would probably succeed in imposing such conditions as would make it well-nigh impossible to obtain a reasonable profit from the working of the railways. This fear can be about the only reason the Company can have for wishing to cling to the

administration with the liability to make good, temporarily of course, any deficit that may arise in spite of the vigilance of the officials.

3. The significance, if any, to be attached to the latest amalgamation proposals.

I do not think that any particular significance can be attached to the Northern Rhodesia movement, except in so far as it shows a distinct breach between Livingstone and the more populous centres of the country. (Livingstone is of no importance except as the seat of Government and a railway camp; there is virtually no farming or mining in the district.) I understand that the advocates of amalgamation with Southern Rhodesia are influential and responsible men. But, so far as I know, there is no section in Southern Rhodesia anxious to take over a country whose Budget shows a deficit of £150,000 per annum. I believe that most Northern Rhodesians, with the exception of the people of Livingstone, would have no objection to the country being taken over by the Union.

4. When at the earliest can any change of Government take place?

Constitutionally there is no reason why the transfer should not be made from April 1, 1922, if an agreement can be reached, but the most convenient date would seem to be April 1, 1923. Much, however, will depend on the form of the change. If it is to be April 1, 1924 would seem to be the most suitable date. For the next eighteen months the financial position will almost inevitably be uncertain and difficult, owing to the fall in Customs duties and income tax. At present the prices for maize are unremunerative, and no one knows what they may be when this season's crop comes to be sold. Very similar conditions obtain in the cattle industry.

5. The strength and policy of the Responsible Government Party and whether when a change takes place R.G. is inevitable.

It is really impossible to say how far the country is behind the Responsible Government Party; there are certainly no songs of enthusiasm or eagerness to see a change brought about. But, in a vague way, there is certainly a widespread belief that the B.S.A. Company has outlived its usefulness and that the country would go ahead more rapidly if there were a change of Administration of some sort. No doubt this feeling has been strengthened by the failure of the Railway Administration to get the last maize crop away expeditiously, so that the producers might have avoided the heavy losses many have incurred. It is held that the Railways should have shut down the transport of coal and chrome (iron) till all the maize was shipped and that their reason for not adopting this course was that the B.S.A. Company has large interests in both those other industries. In point of fact, the Territory disposed of three-quarters, or at least two-thirds, of the exportable surplus at very good prices, so that the average distribution to members of the Farmers' Co. Op. Ltd. should be quite satisfactory. The outcry against the increase of railway rates on maize may have won supporters to the cause of Responsible Government. As a party the R.G. people have no policy whatever beyond insistence on R.G. From Sir Charles Coghlan downwards, not one of them will venture to attempt to show how a Responsible Government can finance the day-to-day needs of a small Colony, to say nothing of providing large capital sums for development schemes. On platforms, in the Press and in private conversation their sole argument is that as the B.S.A. Company refuses to provide loan funds or to Budget deficits, the time has come when the people of the Territory should take control of the expenditure of their own money into their own hands through their own Ministers. I do not myself think that R.G. is inevitable

when a change takes place. It is to be hoped that Lord Buxton's Committee will invite the R.G. leaders to submit definite financial proposals, or invite a Treasury expert to go into the financial aspect of self-government. In either case I feel assured there can be only one verdict – that the country's taxable capacity is quite unequal to the strain of meeting the cost of (1) interest and redemption charges on non-productive debt, (2) the growing cost of services and (3) making provision for encouraging the development of the country's resources and for effecting some form of insurance against an economic crisis, such as the Union is now passing through and Rhodesia may have to face in the near future. A leading business man who moves about the country and financial spheres tells me that business men are becoming very much alarmed as to the financial consequences if the country obtains R.G. and the present type of politicians are placed in control. If there is to be a constitutional change at all within the next two years, I imagine that the vast majority of the business men of Rhodesia would be in favour of union with South.

6. The general view as to the possibility (and desirability) of entry into the Union and whether there is or appears likely to be any pro-Union movement either as something ultimately desirable or something to be desired in preference to Responsible Government.

To a considerable extent the foregoing is answered by what I have already written. Most Rhodesians regard union with the South as the ultimate destiny of their country. Since the general election in the Union there has been quite a noticeable trend towards fusion as an issue that may soon become one of practical politics, if not of necessity. If the people had the promise of R.G. and were asked to choose between that system and Union, probably the majority would vote for the former and take it for granted that their leaders were right when they asserted that the Territory was equal to the management of its own affairs and that the Colonial Office, in acceding to their demands, endorsed that view. But if it were once demonstrated that R.G. is neither practicable nor desirable, having regard to the financial and economic risks involved, I have little doubt that the objections to union would rapidly disappear. But I should like to qualify this statement by saying that there is no real public opinion in Rhodesia; every question brought up for discussion is more or less influenced by a sentimental and unreasoning prejudice against chartered rule. This prejudice is based on nothing at all tangible; as a matter of fact, the relations between Public Service and the public are, without exception, excellent. In the main I agree with those who hold that fusion is the only alternative to R.G. As to when that issue will be fought out, a great deal may depend on the report of Lord Buxton's Committee and the attitude of Mr. Churchill thereon. A loan guaranteed by the Imperial Government may modify the current discontent with reference to the absence of funds for schools and other urgent public works, but it will not remove the desire for a complete change of administration at the earliest practicable date.

7. What, very broadly, do you think would be the conditions Rhodesia would require to induce serious consideration of any scheme of entering Union?

This is the most difficult question in some ways. At present the most formidable obstacle to such consideration is the widespread belief, created and fostered by the R.G. leaders, that R.G. is not only desirable in itself as the attainment of the natural ambition of democratic Britons, but presents no insuperable financial difficulties. Only an official report from some authoritative and independent source is likely to weaken the widespread belief, outside business circles, that Rhodesia has nothing to fear from

complete self-government. The trouble is that leaders and rank and file alike refuse to make the slightest attempt to investigate the financial side of the problem. With regard to terms, Union would attract a great many more people if it were known that the Railways would be taken over and that the people of Rhodesia would immediately receive the full benefit of the South African Railways tariffs, with special consideration to long-distance traffic to and from this part of the Territory. Matabeleland, of course, would be attracted by and would benefit from the construction of the West Nicholson- Messina line. On this side of the country we might have a demand for assurances that the port of Bera would be equipped with up-to-date plant as the Messina line would be of little use to the majority of our producers. We could never send frozen or chilled meat to Delgoa Bay with much hope of making any profit out of it. Republicanism and the fear of compulsory bi-lingualism had more than anything else to do with the unpopularity of the pro-Unionist cause here at last year's elections. General Smut's victory at the polls and the amalgamation with the Unionists have to a large extent robbed the former of its terrors, but the dread of compulsory bi-lingualism in the schools and the Public Service is a factor which could still be exploited with considerable success if the question of fusion were presented to the country in a definite form. It is one, which, if the necessity ever arises, should be easily met by compromise. Dutch is at present taught in many of our schools and there is a fair number of Dutch-speaking officials in the Public Service and there is little racialism in the country in spite of the fact that about 90 per cent of the Dutch settlers are supposed to be Nationalists. The issue of R.G. v union is scarcely likely to be raised in the forthcoming session of the Legislative Council. It is to be hoped that such discussion as take place on the constitutional question will have the ultimate effect of throwing on the R.G. leaders the onus of satisfying both the Colonial Office and the people of the country that Rhodesia is "financially and on other respects" equal to assuming and bearing the burdens of Responsible Government. I have said nothing on the question of parliamentary representation. This should present no difficulties until the time came for selecting candidates for the House of Assembly and the Senate. It would be no easy task to find the men who could afford to remain at CapeTown for five or six months in the year and who would be of real value in the Legislative. In all probability Mr. Burton's Budget will give the pro-union movement, which was making real progress of late, a temporary setback; on the other hand it emphasises, what I have often tried to point out in the columns of the Rhodesia Herald, the essential complexity and pitfalls of R.G. finance in the altered conditions of international trade relations.

...

Mr. A. Harrington.

The judgement of the Privy Council in the Land Case created a new position in Rhodesia by depriving the Chartered Company of the ownership of the land, while it was laid down by the Colonial Office that further financial liabilities on the future of Southern Rhodesia for the purposes of administration and development could not be incurred by the Chartered Company but that the cost of current administration must be met out of current revenue. This proved a great stimulus to the movement for Responsible Government, the popular argument being that "as the people had to find the money for government, they ought to have the power of spending it". SO strong was this feeling that, when Lord Milner proposed means by which self-government should come in 1924, a majority of Rhodesians supported their elected members in urging that the step should be taken even earlier. The Cave Commission award, which is far from generous to the

Chartered Company, has encourage the Responsible Government movement by leading it to believe that still further concessions can be got at the expense of the Company and of the Imperial Government. The unalienated land is, at the moment, held in trust for the repayment to the Company of the accumulated administrative deficits, but the Responsible Government Party's hope is that the Imperial Government may shoulder the financial obligation and set the Colony up financially for the purposes of self-government, much faith being expressed in the Committee now sitting in London under Lord Buxton's chairmanship.

I believe that the B.S.A. Company while well aware of the financial obligations Rhodesia would have to assume under self-government, would place no obstacles in the way of such a step, provided that the necessary settlement were made of the obligations to the Company for its past administrative deficits, to which it is entitled under the Privy Council judgement and the findings of the Cave Commission. Some of the Chartered Directors may be keener than others for Rhodesia's early entry into the Union, and all must be aware that either this step or Responsible Government would mean more taxation than Rhodesia now has, in which the Chartered Company's commercial assets would have to share; but the financial settlement mentioned would put the Company in funds to such an extent as would make possible a great policy of development from which any larger taxation should be easily paid. The Company, like other interests and individuals in Rhodesia, would probably prefer that this development should proceed on the present cautious lines for a year or two longer and that no great change should come before 1924, as Lord Milner suggested. It does seem possible, however, that a change of administration may come late next year, if Lord Buxton's Committee proposes anything acceptable to all parties and capable of being converted into a workable constitution.

The belief in this possibility is largely responsible for the present movement in the more developed portion of Northern Rhodesia (along the railway as far north as Lusaka and Broken Hill) for amalgamation with Southern Rhodesia under responsible Government. This movement came as a surprise to many of us in the South but appears to be the sudden expression of a conviction which has been growing for a long time that provincialism in business and politics was a mistake and that the two territories had many more of common than of conflicting interests. The North Rhodesians do not wish to be left out in the cold and I think these people who favour amalgamation with Southern Rhodesia would, if the latter were so disposed, accompany it equally readily into the Union. It is different with North Eastern Rhodesia, which is very sparsely inhabited with Whites and looks towards Nyasaland, with which territory it may one day be combined, Barotseland to the West probably becoming a Native Protectorate. It will be noted that the Buxton Committee is considering Northern Rhodesian affairs as well as those of Southern Rhodesia and its proposals may include a scheme for both territories.

There can be no doubt about the strength of the Responsible Government aspiration in Southern Rhodesia. It is certain, however, that the overwhelming vote for self-government at our last General Election was largely owing to the fear of the Republican movement in the Union. At the same time there is sufficient enthusiasm for Responsible Government for its own sake to have subdued any public expression of the relief which was felt in Rhodesia at the majority won by General Smuts in the recent election. I believe that if an election were taken in Rhodesia today on the straight issue of Responsible Government v. Union, there would still be a big majority for Responsible Government. None the less a large proportion of Responsible

Government supporters admit that union is inevitable at some time. It appears to me that the Responsible Government movement owes its strength to the following causes :- (1) the need for some settlement of Rhodesia's political and financial uncertainties; (2) the desire that Rhodesians should be in a full position to decide their own future; (3) fear of being involved in the special difficulties of the South without compensating advantages while losing such things as are favourable. Customs Tariff (under the "Rhodes Clause") and our control of our native labour supplies and (4) racial prejudice against Dutch South Africans. Personally, I am convinced that not one of these reasons will bear logical examination and (unless something happens of a very unexpected nature) I think the trend of thought will be towards Union. This would be a slow process unless, the Union recovering rapidly from the present set-back in trade and public finance, could show us the undoubted economic advantages of our entry.

If our political change is to come by, say, the end of 1922, I fear that Rhodesian opinion will hardly have had time to ripen in favour of Union. There are politicians in our midst who are most anxious to taste the sweets of office under self-government. They argue that Rhodesia's credit and taxable capacity are equal to the task. There is a strong view of public doubt on this point, and the doubt tends to grow as we come nearer the experiment. But the experiment may be necessary for Rhodesia's final conversion. I have always been struck by the larger mental capacity and broader outlook (in business matters as well as politics) of the average pro-union Rhodesian; but what that movement at present lacks is support from a great body of the Electorate, and I am inclined to think that the Women's vote, first exercised at our last election, was cast mainly for responsible Government.

Our political leaders are not lacking in the capacity for watching public opinion and shaping their policy and utterances accordingly, and the views of the electors are reflected, in some cases with exaggeration, by the attitude of our elected members in pressing for almost immediate Responsible Government. To get a majority for Union (and it might eventually be disclosed with the dramatic suddenness of the present demand in the north for the amalgamation with Southern Rhodesia) it would be necessary to appeal to (1) the traders and consumers of the towns, (2) to the farmers, (3) to the railway workers, and (4) to the public services. I am writing at a remote spot on the Natal coast with no reference book available, but I think the leader of the Rhodesian Responsible Government Party is wrong when he says that the terms of Rhodesia's entry into the Union are absolutely laid down and restricted by the Act of Union. A very liberal scheme for land settlement (assuming that the Union was prepared to take over our unalienated lands, as, of course, it would have to be) would create an excellent impression in Rhodesia, especially if Rhodesian ex-service men were to have special advantages. Our Railways already have their working arrangements with those of the South. Whether the Rhodesian lines were to be immediately taken over or not, it should be possible to offer some inducements which would appear attractive alike to farmers and townsfolk. I have in mind the expenditure of a considerable sum on the building of Branch railways and the improvement of existing lines, and possibly the carriage of certain goods at "development" rates, made possible by financial guarantee the justification of which would have to be based on the development. The public services would have to be assured as to their posts and emoluments with considerations in the shape of local allowances wherever circumstances demand it – and this would apply for some time and in some degrees to the whole of Rhodesia as compared with the Union. Whether the Railways are taken over at once or not, it should be possible to give equal satisfaction to our very considerate railway staff. But a main argument appealing to Rhodesians

as a whole would be money to be devoted to general development – roads, bridges, schools and facilities for local agricultural education and land bank loan for agricultural expansion. In the matter of Parliamentary representation Rhodesia's allocation of members should be placed as high as possible (17 has been the figure usually accepted as a minimum in serious conversation on the subject) – dependent for revision upon growth of population. IN the matters of Provincial self-government, it might help if Matabeleland and Mashonaland could be made two Provinces of the Union, with a financial "donceau" for each, and some security against the growth of local taxation.

Even under Union, Beira would still be the natural port of a great part of Mashonaland and that Province might be apprehensive of its position in this respect. Though South Africa could hardly be expected to develop a foreign port at the expense of its own, the extension to Beira of some of the South African capital and enterprise which have done so much for Delagoa Bay would carry its weight with Rhodesians. As I have said, the economic arguments will be the deciding factor. I do not think Rhodesians as a whole object to the dual principle, provided it is not unreasonably pressed in education. We have only one or two largely Dutch Rural districts.

APPENDIX 9: ROTHSCHILD LETTER TO MILNER

New Court

4 May 1891

Dear Mr. Milner

I had the pleasure of receiving your letter during a temporary absence from business, owing to the holiday.

I shall be glad to see you here on Thursday at 3 o'clock if that will suit you – I say Thursday as you tell me you will be away on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Yours sincerely

Rothschild

APPENDIX 10: ROTHSCHILD LETTER TO MILNER

London 31 July 1891

My Dear Mr. Milner

I am much obliged for your letter of the 20th and confess that I was somewhat disgusted at the reply of the Caisse to our friendly proposal but then it is only in keeping with the behaviour of those gentlemen on a great many previous occasions.

I do not wish to refer the matter to a third party – we have simply cancelled the commission and there is an end of the matter, except that when ever the Domain conversion does come off we shall take good care not to move a step ^nor allow the operation to take place^ before we are absolutely sure that we receive the ½% commission to which we are entitled for the cancellation of Bonds, whether in part or as a whole. However, there is no chance of the conversion coming off for a long time and so this is only meant for a friendly airis an lecteur.

Pray believe me

Yours very sincerely

Rothschild

A. Milner by Cairo

APPENDIX 11: THE FITZPATRICK LETTERS

Dep.	Date	Sender	Receiver	Content
33. Fol. 76A	24 May 1906	Fitzpatrick	Chamberlain	Asked to convey message to Milner re his loyalty
43. Fol. 136-148	7 December 1915	Fitzpatrick	?	Regarding Hertzog and political maneuverings
44. Fol. 250.	11 December 1916	Fitzpatrick	Milner	Just says: At last thank god
177.fol.174-175	5 September 1902	?	Fitzpatrick	Regarding future taxation projections
177. Fol. 176-182	26 October 1900	Milner	Fitzpatrick	Re. refugees; and the light horses regiment
177.fol. 183-184	21 December 1902	Milner	Fitzpatrick	Regarding Modderfontein Factory
185. Fol. 163-164A	27 July 1901	Fitzpatrick	Milner	Re. meeting with Wernher; war contribution
187.fol.119	10 July 1903	Fitzpatrick	Milner	Rhodes advised using imperialism as mask for own ambitions
190. Fol. 67-68A	12 August 1905	Fitzpatrick	Milner	
190. Fol. 263.-264	26 November 1905	Fitzpatrick	Milner	Constitutional committee
191. Fol.1-2A	8 January 1906	Fitzpatrick	Milner	Constitutional committee
191.fol.3-5	5 February 1906	Fitzpatrick	Milner	Constitutional committee
191. Fol.182-183A	12 March 1906	Fitzpatrick	Milner	Constitutional committee
191. Fol. 188	19 March 1906	Fitzpatrick's secretary	Milner	Enclosed documents
191. Fol. 189-192	March 1906	Fitzpatrick's secretary	Milner	The attached documents; makes a comparison between political events of 1899 and 1906. Fitzpatrick was barred from negotiations as he was too uncompromising.
192. Fol. 14-40.	7 May 1906	Fitzpatrick	Wernher	Copy of letter in the Wernher collection
192. 43-48	14 May 1906	Fitzpatrick	Wernher	Copy of letter in the Wernher collection
192. Fol.88-100	28 May 1906	Fitzpatrick	Wernher	Copy of letter in the Wernher collection
192. Fol. 101-104	24 May 1906	-	-	Memorandum Re Chinese labour
192. Fol. 105-112	4 June 1906	Fitzpatrick	Wernher	Copy of letter in the Wernher collection
192. Fol. 144	30 May 1906	Barnett	Fitzpatrick	Re constitutional committee
192. Fol. 115-121	31 May 1906	The Progressives	Constitutional Committee	Copy of letter in the Wernher collection
192. Fol. 122-128	-	-	-	Copy of previous letter
192. Fol. 129-133	-	-	-	Copy of previous letter
192. Fol. 134	2 June 1906	Fitzpatrick	Milner	Cable- compromise wont mean British majority
192. Fol.135-138	11 June 1906	Fitzpatrick	Wernher	Copy of letter in Wernher collection
192. Fol. 144-148	-	-	-	Copy of previous letter
192. Fol.149	9 June 1906	Progressives	Selborne	Copy of letter in the Wernher collection

192. Fol. 150-152	9 June 1906	Progressives	Selborne	Copy of letter in the Wernher Collection
192. Fol. 153-159	9 June 1906	Chairman constitutional committee	Progressives	Copy of letter in the Wernher Collection
192. Fol. 160-164	-	-	-	copy of previous
192. Fol.219-221	13 September 1906	Fitzpatrick	T.J. Milner	Establishment of public school with Milner and Beit
192. Fol.277-294		Fitzpatrick	Milner	meeting with Selborne regarding War Debt
192. Fol. 162-186	3 August 1907	Fitzpatrick	Wernher	federation should be economically (railways etc.)
194. Fol. 194	28 October 1907	Fitzpatrick	Milner	Regarding trust and loyalty to Milner
195. Fol. 82-83	18 June 1908	Fitzpatrick	Milner	-
195. Fol. 88-92	28 June 1908	Fitzpatrick	Milner	Fight for British South Africa
195. Fol. 160-166	14 Nov 1908	Fitzpatrick	Milner	Result of conference
195. Fol. 167-179	-	-	-	Monograph on Lytellton commission
196. Fol. 194.-194A	14 March 1910	Fitzpatrick	Milner	-
197. Fol. 100-101A	17 October 1910	Fitzpatrick	Milner	-
197. Fol. 102-118	1910?	Fitzpatrick	Nugent Fitzpatrick	Explains what happened in 1907 to his osn
197. Fol. 175-186	3 March 1911	Fitzpatrick	Milner	3 March 1911
198. Fol. 197-203	23 October 1913	Fitzpatrick	Milner	not giving up on the promise he made Milner and the citrus industry.
198. Fol. 204-205	6 November 1913	Fitzpatrick	Milner	-
199. Fol. 3-9	23 January 1914	Fitzpatrick	Milner	-
199. Fol.154-155A	28 August 1922	Fitzpatrick	Milner	-
209. Fol. 19	-	Fitzpatrick	Stevens	Failed meeting with Kruger, no more negotiations
212. Fol. 391-396	21 October 1899	Fitzpatrick	Milner	-
212. Fol. 552-557A	23 December 1899	Fitzpatrick	Milner	-
215. Fol. 65-65A	2 June 1902	Fitzpatrick	Milner	-
215. Fol. 66	24 September 1901	Fitzpatrick	Milner	-
216. Fol. 47-48A	10 July 1903	Fitzpatrick	Milner	-
217. Fol.44-49	22 July 1905	Fitzpatrick	Milner	-
217. Fol.50-54	8 June 1905	Fitzpatrick	Milner	-
218. Fol. 16	24 May 1906	Fitzpatrick	Milner	-
218. Fol.62	2 February 1906	Fitzpatrick	Milner	Telegram; tribute to Milner

218. Fol. 63	27 February 1907	Fitzpatrick	Milner	Telegram; heartfelt gratitude
218. Fol. 429-432	11 January 1907	Fitzpatrick	Milner	constitutional committee
218. Fol. 436-436A	21 February 1907	Fitzpatrick	Milner	-
218. Fol. 437-437A	11 November 1907	Fitzpatrick	Milner	-
218. Fol. 507	25 July 1907	Fitzpatrick	Milner	-
220. Fol. 295-298	28 November 1899	Milner	Fitzpatrick	how south Africa should be and be administered
229. Fol. 29 - 35	1 May 1899	Fitzpatrick	Brabrand	-
230. Fol. 10	2 July 1900	Fitzpatrick	Brabrand	-
230. Fol. 11	4 July?	Fitzpatrick	Civil Commissioner	-
230. Fol. 14	-	Fitzpatrick	Samuel Evans	removal of capital
252. Fol. 30-30A	23 November 1902	Fitzpatrick	Milner	-
354. Fol. 273-273A	19 December 1916	Fitzpatrick	Milner	-
355. Fol. 161-161A	4 September 1918	Fitzpatrick	Milner	-
372. Fol. 1- 4	14 January 1917	Fitzpatrick	Amery	-
477. Fol. 39-41	9 April 1924	Fitzpatrick	Otto Beit	Bucklands Down
477. Fol. 42	9 April 1924	Fitzpatrick	Otto Beit	-
477. fol. 43-45		T. Lawrence	Fitzpatrick	19 March 1924
664. Fol. 26		Fitzpatrick	Milner	Telegram; sympathy for something
667. Fol. 153-159	7 December 1925	Otto Beit	Fitzpatrick	Lukin Dying

APPENDIX 12: THE BAILEY LETTERS

Num.	Date	Sender	Receiver	Content
Dep. 37. Fol. 139-140	6 February 1891	Bailey	Milner	Expressing his pleasure at receiving letter from Milner;
Dep. 46. Fol.76	6 October 1916	Bailey	Milner	Attaches letter from someone else to provide perspective; eager for a war job
Dep. 46. Fol. 77- 82	20 Aug 1918	John X. Merriman	Bailey	Thanks bailey for Selborne letter; updates Bailey on O.F.S. political situation
Dep. 46. Fol. 83A	-	-	-	Newspaper article by Bailey; worshipping Rhodes
Dep. 46. Fol. 91-92	25 November 1918	Bailey	Milner	Busy after the war; refuses offer of portrait of himself
Dep. 176. Fol. 136-138	7 September 1900	Bailey	Milner	Bailey asked to contribute to refugee fund; complains he spent a lot during war; christened his son Milner
Dep. 176. Fol. 139-140A	7 June 1902	Bailey	Milner	Congratulations on end of War; ideas for large scale work and settling people; concerned about the ambiguity of the peace agreement; found a university to counter Stellenbosch
Dep. 176. Fol. 139-140B	18 July 1902	Milner	Bailey	Replying to several letters from Bailey: Settling British on Bailey's farms; Delay employing Julius Jeppe
Dep. 190. Fol.4	3 July 1905	Bailey	Milner	Misses Milner's help in S.A.; Farrar not liked; Sick of politics
Dep. 215. Fol. 15A-15D	14 August 1902	Bailey	Milner	People focus on joburg not South Africa; did not expect a reply; keeping new Zealand immigrants; boers would win an election; thinking about entering politics
Dep. 216. Fol. 201A-201B	-	-	-	-
Dep. 217. Fol.156	1 April 1905	Bailey	Milner	Reports info that leader of responsables as dead as Julius Caesar; Milner can have easy mind about them; thanks milner for his hard work for 'his country'
Dep. 218. Fol.11	27 February 1906	Bailey	Milner	Telegram: congratulations on speech
Dep.277. fol.69	21 August 1899	Jan S. Celliers (Boer spy)	-	Reports on a report sent about mission to Mafeking and Zeerust
Dep. 227. Fol. 65	20 June 1899	-	Dr. W.J. Leyds	Thanks for letter received G.Q.R to G.R.
Dep. 227. Fol. 66.	22 June 1899			Rubbish: it is a burden to our company
Dep. 227. Fol. 67-68	22 June 1899	T.W. Beckett & Coy. Ltd.	State President	Offers his companies services re supplies to HM Government
Dep. 474. Fol. 48	2 April 1906	Bailey	Milner	Hope enjoyed voyage; had lunch with archbishop and master of Rondebosch; increase teacher salaries; wants milners advice on libraries; thinks Rhodesia is second California; cotton, tobacco.
Dep. 2017. Fol. 8	4 March 1905	Bailey	Milner	Saw Botha who is anxious to come to terms; wants to meet milner for advice
Dep. 2017. Fol. 9-9A	27 July 1905	Bailey	Milner	Original of dep. 190. Fol.4

APPENDIX 13: THE FARRAR LETTERS

Num.	Date.	Sender	Receiver	Content
Dep. 177. Fol. 169 – 171A	3 March 1905	Milner	Farrar	Railway Committee and council
Dep. 177. Fol. 172-173	21 April 1903	Milner	Farrar	Visiting Boksbrug; agitated pop. Largely about asiatics And municipal boundaries
Dep. 186. Fol. 115.	1902	President Sons of England	Milner	Congratulations end of S.A. War
Dep. 186. Fol. 122.	1902	Farrar	Milner	Congratulations at end of war
Dep. 188. Fol. 13	18 February 1904	Farrar	Milner	Thanks for assisting in Labour problem
Dep. 192. Fol. 246-250	5 November 1906	Farrar	Milner	M hired F for position of Officer of health; wants higher pension
Dep. 192. Fol. 271-276	27 Nov. 1906	Farrar	Milner	Regarding a report on the Transvaal and ORC
Dep. 194. 42-49A.	20 January 1907	G.G.R.	Milner	Regarding £1000 owed to him; and a pamphlet written by Lionel Curtis and edited by all; Dinner of Kindergarten at Bailey's house
Dep. 194. Fol. 80-83	6 March 1905	Farrar	Milner	Asks Milner to make a speech at his brothers
Dep. 194. Fol. 124-133	26 May 1907	G.G.R	Milner	Response to Milner letter; collecting info for Milner; Het Volk and politics
Dep. 198. Fol. 37-38.	25 March 1912	Farrar	Milner	Attaches a resolution;
Dep. 198. Fol. 39	23 March 1912	Farrar	Milner	Enclosed resolution
Dep. 199. fol. 29 - 30	15 December 1914	Farrar	Milner	Extract from a letter from Smuts; regarding controlling rebellion
Dep. 199. Fol. 31-33	-	-	-	Copy of previous, with extended extract from Milner, Curtis etc. about the War
Dep. 215. Fol.45-45A	4 August	Farrar's children	Milner	Wishing him a good voyage
Dep. 215. Fol.46	-	Farrar's children	Milner	Wishing him well
Dep. 215. Fol. 178	25 March 1903	-	Milner	Farrar outlines work done; complains about criticisms by the press; congratulates Milner on the negotiations
Dep. 215. Fol. 266	-	Farrar's children	Milner	Farewells
Dep. 215. Fol. 267.	-	Didie?	Milner	Thanks for pedant and wishes to see Milner in England
Dep. 215. Fol. 268.	18 February 1904	Farrar	Milner	Thanks Milner for his work on the Labour problem;
Dep. 217. Fol.34-42A	16 December 1904	Farrar	Milner	
Dep. 217. Fol.43	-	Farrar's children	Milner	Misses Milner; asks not to be forgotten while away;
Dep. 217. Fol.201	5 April 1905	Farrar	Milner	Telegram; will miss Milner
Dep. 217. 202	3 April 1905	Farrar	Milner	Bon Voyage
Dep. 218. Fol. 16	24 May 1906	Fitzpatrick, Progressives, Loyalists etc.	Milner	Expressions of confidence towards Milner
Dep. 218. Fol.56	28 February 1906	Farrar	Milner	Sincerest thanks
Dep. 218. Fol.57	23 March 1906	Farrar and Duncan	Milner	Happy Birthday
Dep. 218. Fol. 59-60	5 October -	Farrar	Milner	Thanks to Milner; only person he can speak to
Dep. 218. Fol.182	22 February 1907	Secretary of Consolidated Gold Fields	Milner	The renegades have sold us George Farrar
Dep. 218. Fol. 425-427A	25 March	Farrar's child Helen	Milner	Describes her experience of the opening of Parliament
Dep. 218. Fol. 428.	2 June 1907	Farrar	Milner	Congratulates Milner on Speech;
Dep. 218. Fol. 506	25 February 1907	Farrar	Milner	
Dep. 2014. fol. 72-74	19 December 1900	Farrar	Milner	Rumour of rising in the colony; wants to take harsh measures
Dep. 2014. Fol. 289.	24 May	Farrar	Milner	Congratulations on safe arrival
Dep. 194. Fol. 78	18 March 1907	Farrar	Milner	Regarding Botha